

CHRISTIANITY
AND THE
RELIGIONS OF INDIA.

ESSAYS BY

JAMES KENNEDY, M. A.;

RANEE, KHET, NORTHERN INDIA.

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PREFACE.

The Essays, which have been in course of publication for more than a year, under the name of "Essays on Fundamental Questions for English Readers in India," are now issued in a collected form with a new title.

If persons come to these Essays in the expectation of finding all the points discussed, or even touched, which bear on their respective subjects, they are sure to be disappointed.* Within the narrow limits of Essays on such great and wide themes, attention has necessarily been confined to the most salient features. Some may suppose that secondary things have been unduly expanded, while important aspects have been either omitted or very slightly treated. The writer can only say for himself that he has aimed at presenting those aspects, which appeared to him most important, in the proportion to which he deemed them entitled.

It will be observed there is very little reference to authorities or books. For some of the Essays there was no special reading, those views being expressed, which had been long entertained, while for others there was recourse to the few books, which were within the writer's reach. This was mainly the case with the last four Essays. Even in these however references are sparingly given, from an unwillingness to encumber the page with marks unsuitable to brief popular expositions. Care has

been at the same time taken to make no statement respecting the opinions and sentiments of others, for which authority cannot be easily produced. The Christian advocate, who is true to his cause, must strive to the utmost to avoid unfairness, and to treat the views of his opponents with the utmost candour. •

Since the Essay on Muhammadanism was published, the writer has read the article on Islam by Mr. Emanuel Deutsch, which appeared in the Quarterly Review for October, 1869. This article, like the still more famous article on the Talmud, which preceded it, is bright with the genius, and laden, almost over-laden with the learning of the lamented author, but if one come to it expecting to have clearly set before him the characteristic and essential difference between the religion of the Bible and Muhammadanism, he will be disappointed. A second article on Islam was promised, which we suppose never appeared.

The new work by Mr. Henry Rogers, "The super-human origin of the Bible," has come very recently to hand. The argument of this admirable volume will be very satisfactory to those, who clearly perceive the nature of the evidence suitable to the subject discussed, who refuse to follow side and irrelevant issues, and who are bent on receiving what is true, and doing what is right.

The controversy between Christianity and infidelity, instead of abating, goes on with increasing keenness. If bold assertion, self-confidence, and contempt for others were to carry the day, there can be no doubt with whom the victory would remain. The thinking, the enlightened, the unprejudiced have now got beyond the region of doubt, and with one voice unmistakably pronounce against—no, not against Christianity, but against—dogma and old orthodoxy. Towards the end of the last

century 'liberal and rational' Christians vaunted that persons of sense were every where giving up those dogmas, which had till then been deemed the heart of Christianity. We recently met with the dictum of Mrs. Barbauld, who was deemed an oracle of liberal Christianity in her day, "Evangelical doctrines are losing ground among thinking people." The successors of these 'thinking people' continue in the same jubilant strain. Poor Strauss in his last work, 'The Old Faith and the New,' says, "An object of religious adoration must have Divinity, and thinking men have long ceased to regard the founder of Christianity as such." It is clear that the dogmas so repudiated die hard. During the past twelve months, as in former times, they have proved life to many thousands, and thus they have certainly obtained a new lease of life. Nothing presents such a bulwark against infidelity as the spread of living godliness. People can easily part with that which has not become a portion of themselves, but no sophistry, no vaunt, no jeer, no air of superiority can deprive us of that which we daily know and feel to be God's power and wisdom for our salvation. Every day our Lord's words are being fulfilled, "For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken, even that which he hath."

These Essays written "for English readers in India" are addressed to persons widely separated from each other by nationality, training, and profession. The attempt has been made to meet these divers classes, but the difficulty of writing in a way suitable to all has been keenly felt.

During the course of the year fresh reason has been seen for putting in the forefront the great subject, "The character and claims of the Lord Jesus Christ."

It is in the presence of this glorious Object the utter helplessness of infidelity is seen to be most manifest. This is the citadel in which Christians dwell. Take this and all is lost. Let this remain impregnable, and nothing is lost, which we need to contend for. Mark well what infidelity has to say on this theme, and if you be satisfied with its explanations, all we can do is to declare our profound conviction no Christian can approach you in credulity.

These Essays are now sent forth with the earnest prayer that by the Divine blessing they may be useful. The writer painfully feels how far they fall beneath their themes, and even beneath his own ideal, but he is not without hope that they may be of service to some who are misled by ignorance, and blinded by prejudice.

The Essays were first published anonymously, not from unwillingness to bear responsibility, but from the desire that the discussion should rest on its own merits. They now appear with the author's name.

J. K.

December, 1874.

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“The Christian should not absolutely avoid encountering objections, for to answer the objections of unbelief is to give a reason for the faith he holds. Those who address their objections to a Christian, should not part from him with the unfortunate impression that he believes without proof, and that his faith is but a stupid prepossession.”—VINET.

“Truth is at once demonstrable and certain, but not obtrusive. Whoever will may acquaint himself with truth and virtue, but neither stands on the high way, or forces herself upon the notice of passengers.”—ISAAC TAYLOR.

Introductory Essay.

This Essay is the introduction to a series of Essays on the great questions, which are so largely and keenly discussed in our day. Proposed publication.

We well know the objections which will be started against the proposed publication. We shall be told: 'You better let well alone. You are likely to put objections before simple minds, which have never occurred to them, and may thus suggest doubts, which your arguments will fail to remove.' This is no imaginary danger. Persons, whose minds had never been disturbed about the truth of Christianity, have sometimes been more startled by the objections mentioned in books written in its defence, than assured by the arguments furnished in reply. The Christian advocate ought never to forget this, and should take care not to attempt an answer to an objection, when he is not satisfied he has a good answer to give. The answer may however be fitted to give satisfaction, though its force has not been felt, and the Christian advocate can only regret that his well designed effort has been the occasion of evil. Objections. 'You better let well alone.'

Where infidel objections are utterly unknown, it would be unwise to state them and to advance formal proofs of the Divine origin of Christianity, but even in these circumstances all should see the immovable rock on which the Gospel rests, and have a rational conviction that it is from God. In all ages, Christians of every class, learned and unlearned, ought to be able to give a reason of the hope that is in them, but there are times, when there is no need for formal argumentation. We do not live in such times. To let alone now is to let ill alone. We cannot turn our backs on controversy, without being recreant to the truth. In many forms, through many channels, by books, pamphlets, periodicals, newspapers, lectures on scientific sub-

jects, and even works of fiction, doubt is diffused, and has injuriously affected many a mind. It is well-nigh impossible to come into contact in the slightest degree with the literature of the day, without meeting remarks aimed at the unsettling of the mind on fundamental questions. Are those who receive the Bible as the Word of God to remain silent, while those who reject it are so loud and confident? This would be to leave infidelity to vaunt that believers in Christianity were silent, because they could say nothing in proof of that to which they still clung. We should thus not only misrepresent ourselves, but, what is infinitely worse, betray a cause which ought to be dearer to us than life. The followers of Christ have reasons for their belief, which fully satisfy them, and which they ought to state on all fitting occasions.

'Enough
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ed.'

If it be allowed that as infidelity is so aggressive faith is obliged in self defence to take an antagonistic form, it may yet be said, that surely enough has been written, nothing new can be advanced, and all interested in these matters may be referred to able works, which can be easily procured. We may be asked, 'What need is there for *your* publication? Have *you* any thing new to advance, or can *you* put things in a clearer light?' Even if we were in England, where mind is so active, and where books on this great controversy are continually appearing, we think we could say something in reply to this question. We most readily and thankfully acknowledge that many admirable books, pamphlets, and lectures in exposition and defence of Christianity have recently appeared, and continue to appear. These works are well fitted, when carefully and candidly read, to scatter doubt, and establish faith. Our only regret is that they are so little read by those who need them most, and that when read, hostile prejudice often prevents the mind from being duly influenced by their arguments. It has saddened us many a time to think of deadly error being maintained, when at hand there was an antidote well fitted to cure it, with which the mind was not allowed to come in contact. The readiness with which books of Christian advocacy are thrown aside unread, or at best glanced at, by those who have given themselves over to the seductions of unbelief, is a certain and painful fact. In reference to such persons it might at first sight appear that the

multiplication of books on this subject would be utterly useless, and yet every now and then a person is induced to read some new book or pamphlet, and receives benefit from it, while some better publication on the same subject has been long accessible, but has not been looked at.

If one be not satisfied he can say something to purpose, he ought certainly to remain silent, but if he has thought and felt much on the subject discussed, and can entertain the hope that by writing he may exert on some minds a happy influence, while he highly appreciates what others have done, and takes a very humble estimate of his own powers, he does not feel it presumptuous to appear before the public. No subject indeed can be broached of general interest, religious, political, social, or scientific, without creating both writers and readers, and while the interest continues, the pen will remain active, and the press will send forth its productions. We may have come to the conclusion that enough has been written, but whether we like it or not, thought will strive to find new expression, and that expression, if at all worthy of the theme, will obtain its measure of attention. In readers as well as in writers there is most marked mental diversity, and in consequence the more fully a subject is discussed, the greater is the likelihood that its merits will be perceived, and that minds will be approached on the side, on which they are most accessible. A work with no special power in thought or expression, but adapted to certain minds, may succeed where a work of superior excellence may fail. A gun-boat has sometimes done execution, where a frigate could not enter. A skirmishing party succeeds, where an army would be foiled.

This great controversy has peculiar claims on Christians in India. The English in this country are now in many respects almost on a level with their brethren at home. They are subject to the same influences. A few still survive, who remember the time when there was no regular Overland Mail, and when the bulk of the correspondence between England and India was sent in sailing vessels round the Cape of good Hope. Many remember when there was only a Monthly Overland Mail, and when even on the most important routes in India the Postal bags wearily made their way to their destination on

This controversy has peculiar claims on Indian Christians.

the shoulders of men. There was no Book Post in those days. Of course English books were procured, but the supply was slow and scanty, and the expense was great. All that is now changed. If we were at our home fire-sides we could scarcely see more books, periodicals, or papers, than we do in India, or be kept more entirely *en rapport* with every phase of public opinion. In addition to the vast amount of literature, which every Mail Steamer brings, to send forth to the remotest corners of this great Empire, we have to add the influence of the frequent and rapid visits to our Native Land, which have become practicable under the new conditions of our Indian life. India has its drawbacks still, but it is no longer the dreary distant land of exile, which to many it was a generation ago.

One necessary effect of this altered state of things is the sympathy felt with every thing which stirs the mind of our home brethren. Whatever phase of opinion prevails in any class there, we may be sure that the same phase will appear among the same class of our countrymen here. No one can doubt that unbelief in its various forms has made its way to India, and is exerting a powerful influence on not a few of the more cultured of our countrymen. The fact has much painful interest for those who firmly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour and the Lord of men, and who earnestly desire the spiritual good of this country.

The hurtful effects of unbelief.

Unbelief is fraught with evil every where, but in a country like this it is specially hurtful. To say nothing of the wholesome restraints it throws down, and the cheering and soul-refreshing influences it withdraws—restraints and influences so much needed among the temptations and vicissitudes of an Indian life—it fosters not merely indifference but hostility to every effort put forth to promote the spiritual good of Hindoos and Muhammadans.

Influence thrown into the anti-Missionary scale.

No one will maintain that as a people we have in this country sought to evangelize the natives of the land. We are using the language of simple truth, when we say that as a people we have thrown our influence into the anti-Missionary scale. There has always been a minority bent on doing what they could to promote the diffusion of that Gospel; which they have felt to be heaven's best boon to themselves, but the minority is

small compared with the many of opposite views and wishes. Those who are loud in proclaiming the failure of Missions have in many an instance, while retaining the Christian name, done what they could to make their words true. There has been no wish for even the nominal profession of Christianity. If like the Dutch in Ceylon we had made a profession of Christianity a pass-port to office of every description, long ere this, notwithstanding the power of caste, the adherents of Christianity would have abounded all over the land, but we did not act thus, and it is well we did not. The nominal gain would have been a real loss. It would however have been well for ourselves and for the people of this country, if we had lived Christian lives, and if as Christians we had sought to bring others to the faith of Jesus. This as a nation we have not done. To a large extent we have opposed the spread of the Gospel. To say nothing of the grossly immoral lives, which too many so called Christians have led before the heathen, not a few who have been respected for their correct, upright, and honourable bearing, and have occupied a high place in society, have not merely kept aloof from evangelistic effort, but have given the impression to all brought into close contact with them, that they did not desire the prevalence of Christianity in India. It is impossible to estimate the amount of injury thus done to the cause of Christian Missions.

In one respect things are now worse than they formerly were. Formerly there was little of speculative or avowed infidelity. Now this has to some extent spread, and so far as it has, its tendency is to turn indifference into active hostility. When persons have come to the conclusion that Christianity is an effete system, in their intercourse with others, especially with those who have received an English education, they cannot but say what they think. A new obstacle is thus raised to the progress of the Gospel, as if the obstacles, with which we had previously to contend, were not sufficiently formidable. Every true Christian must heartily desire the arrest of the unbelief, which in a country like this is doubly hurtful both to its subjects and to society, and we think every effort should be encouraged; which aims at bringing these persons to a better mind. Such is the object of this publication. We

Things
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merly.

know well that many have hastily taken up false and pernicious views, and will not listen to what may be advanced on the other side. We are well aware of the utter neglect with which Christian publications are often treated, and we must expect our publication in many an instance to lie unheeded, but still we may hope it may receive the attention of some, and may by the Divine blessing do them good, the more so as we propose to take up some subjects, which specially affect us in this country. This hope at once justifies and encourages us to go forward.

The hereditary adherents of Christianity.

Among our countrymen are not a few, who have, if they have nothing more, an hereditary attachment to Christianity, and an intense dislike to infidelity, but who have studied the subject too slightly to know either what they ought to believe, or why they should believe. We should esteem it a great joy if we could do any thing to enlighten and fortify such persons, and above all we should be thankful, if we could so present the truth to them, that by the Divine blessing they might become the intelligent and devoted followers of the Saviour. The guardianship of the untainted, and of those who are in danger of being tainted, ought to be sought after by us, as well as the reclamation of those who have gone astray.

Educated Natives.

There is still another class, whose good we seek by this series of Essays. A large and increasing number of Natives are well acquainted with the English language, and come into close contact with English people. Many of these are in public offices, and are kindly supplied by their official superiors with English books and papers. They quickly perceive the tone of the literature thus furnished to them, and in many an instance they are highly gratified by it. As a class they are alienated from the popular Hindooism, and they are glad to hear that Christianity has no foundation. Till recently many of them, especially those educated in Mission Schools, have had the impression that Christianity is true, but they have shrunk from the serious consideration of it, lest they should be compelled to take a step, which would bring on them social disgrace and ruin. They are delighted, when told, that Christianity, as a Divine supernatural system, is discarded by enlightened Englishmen. Brahmoism has stilled the anxieties of many, and the tone of many English periodicals and papers

has perhaps had a sedative effect on a still greater number. It is much to be feared that this class, largely owing to this cause, is farther from the kingdom of God than it was some years ago. It is certain that conversions from it have decreased of late. One cannot come into contact with educated natives without perceiving the bad effect produced. A few months ago an English-speaking native said to the writer of this Essay, 'Why do you speak to me about Christianity? Have you never heard of Bishop Colenso and of the proof he has given the Bible has no foundation? Ignorant people may listen to a Missionary, but we educated people know too much to pay any regard to what he may say for his religion.' For this class several excellent works have been prepared, among which Dr. Murray Mitchell's Letters to Indian Youth are entitled to a high place. There is still room for further effort on behalf of this very interesting class. We shall be glad if in the case of any we succeed in dispelling the false notions, which keep them away from Christ.

Having said this much in explanation and defence of the proposed series of Essays, we beg to state the particular subjects we are to discuss, and the way in which we wish to discuss them. We propose to discuss such fundamental questions as the character and claims of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Apostolic Writings, and the Bible. We also intend to take up such subjects as the controversies of the day in their bearing on Christianity, Hindooism, Muhamadanism, Christian Missions in India, and the Lord's Day, commonly called Sunday.

The subjects of the Essays.

The Essays must be allowed to speak for the mode and spirit of the discussion. We better take care not to fall into the error, which some writers have committed, of promising in the preface what they have not fulfilled in the book. We can only say we have definite views as to the manner and temper in which such Essays should be written, and we shall try to act in accordance with these views. The subjects themselves are so wide, and have so many bearings, that each might well demand a volume. It is simply impossible, within our limits, to state every thing which might be justly advanced. The necessity for compression is not seldom an advantage. A small map of a country, marking the principal places, showing their relation to each

The aim of the discussion, and the spirit to be maintained.

other, and indicating the principal mountains and rivers, is often more useful than a large map, on which every small hamlet and tiny rivulet are named. Many will read an Essay and follow its thoughts, who will not attempt to read a volume. The danger in such papers as those now to be issued lies between a bare meagerness, and an undue expansion. We shall try to escape the danger by giving our attention to the main points, and by aiming to give them only the amount of discussion requisite for their due elucidation. We wish to put the subjects treated as broadly as possible before the reader to show what we believe, and why we believe, and as we proceed, to show the futility of the objections which have been started. The declaration of the truth is in many a case the best refutation of error. Truth speaks for itself, and the more plainly it is set forth the more precious is it to its friends, and the more likely is it to disarm its foes.

We do not wish to take a merely defensive attitude, to confine ourselves to meeting objections. It is very depressing to a garrison to be pent up in a fortress however strong. It gives them heart to sally out, and assail the enemy on their own ground. The advocates of Christianity in our day are in danger of assuming too much of the apologetic and merely defensive attitude. It is our firm conviction, that the positive reasons for belief are strong and impregnable, though as might be fully expected there are difficulties it cannot solve, while the reasons for unbelief get all their apparent strength from partial one-sided views, and are confronted by insuperable difficulties. Unbelief requires a credulity, to which believers are not equal. The Christian advocate is bound by his sacred cause to attack what he deems false, as well as to defend what he deems true. A simpering, hesitating, apologetic tone, as if he were half ashamed of what he defended, and would let alone, if let alone, is unworthy of him. No undue advantage indeed ought to be taken, there ought to be no fighting merely for victory, sophistry ought to be shunned, as if it were a viper, and scrupulous fairness ought to be maintained. Every effort should be made to understand the views and stand-point of opponents. Harsh and rancorous words, contemptuous expressions, and imputations of bad motives ill become those who

call Jesus Master. We cannot however discuss such subjects, as if they were mere matters of opinion, supported on either side by probabilities of more or less value, and regarding which at worst only an error of judgment can be committed, which will bring no great evil in its train. They are to us matters of life and death, to which too great importance cannot be attached. In the Bible belief is demanded as a duty from every one to whom the Gospel is addressed, and unbelief is represented as a soul-ruining sin. If unbelief were the result of defective evidence, if belief was withheld solely because sound reasons for belief were not forthcoming, then unbelief would deserve praise instead of blame. If belief be refused, not because the evidence is defective, but because the mind from a hostile bias refuses to weigh its claims, then unbelief exposes itself to righteous condemnation. This is the aspect, in which the Scriptures represent the matter. Many regard this view as uncharitable and intolerable dogmatism. We only wish such persons would see what Christianity is, would with candour and earnestness ponder the proofs of its Divine origin in their length and breadth, and then we could hope they would cease to stumble at the high claims of faith, and at the sentence pronounced on unbelief.

Will the reader bear with us while throughout the remaining part of this Essay we note, in a discursive fashion, some of the aspects of this great controversy?

We hear much of the infidelity of the age. There was a period not far distant, which many remember, when avowed infidelity was almost confined in our country to obscure individuals, and was regarded by the more respectable portions of the community as a mere pretext for anarchy and wickedness. It has come out from its dark corners, and now walks openly among us, but in process of adoption by persons of culture, refinement, and position, it has laid aside much of its grossness, and even when aiming its most deadly thrusts professes its high regard for truth and virtue. It often indeed tells us its mission is to rescue religion from the excrescences, which have marred its beauty, and obscured its splendour, and to exhibit it in its pristine worth, so that it may be welcome to rational and cultured minds. While stripping our Saviour of His ho-

The infidelity of the day.

nours, and bringing Him down to the level of humanity, it has many a gracious word to say about the superiority of His character and the excellence of His teaching. Various are the methods which it adopts, and the dogmas it inculcates (for unbelief has its dogmas as well as belief), but in the destructive part of its work its voice is uniform. The sum of its teaching on its destructive side, which is its main side, may perhaps be thus expressed :—

‘ A supernatural revelation of God’s will is a dream. Miracles in every shape are men’s fancies, not God’s doing. We know God’s laws, we can clearly trace them, and beyond the groove of these laws, as known to us, God has never gone. Miracles are impossible, and no amount of evidence can prove them. The Bible is to a large extent composed of legends, and falsified history, and at best is only the way in which the Shemitic mind tried to apprehend things beyond its reach. What is good and wise in it we ought to receive, because it is wise and good, just as we do in reference to other books ; but it has no Divine authority, and we are to receive nothing simply because we find it there. Christ was a great and good man, but he was only a man. He was born, he lived, he died, he lies in his grave, like other men. We know nothing of a state for human beings beyond the grave. Probabilities may be adduced on both sides, and let persons adopt those they deem the strongest. There may be a personal God, or there may not. There are undoubtedly powerful forces at work around us, but what they indicate no wise man will positively say. At best there can be only probable opinion, and people may please themselves as they like in the matter. Persons may be Pantheists, Materialists, Positivists, down-right avowed Atheists, and be worthy of all respect as rational men, but believers in the Bible as the Word of God are the enemies of reason, of liberty, of fact, and of common sense.’

Such is the infidelity of our day. It has assumed many forms, and made a deep impression. At one time it comes out with boldness and explicitness, and at another it muffles itself in hints and insinuations, as if unwilling to shock timid minds. Scarcely any class is unaffected, but no doubt many of the humbler and less educated are comparatively little

moved, while on the higher and more educated, including those brought up in Christian families, it has had a powerful influence. Not a few have given themselves over entirely to it, while a still larger number have been brought into the region of doubt, in which everything is unsettled and uncertain. Hitherto they may have thought little about such matters, but so far as they attended to them these things were deemed too sure to be questioned, and too sacred to be touched. Now these things are thrown into the crucible of doubt, and there in the opinion of many they have been evaporated into air. Their certainty and sacredness have alike vanished.

To the allegations of unbelief we are convinced a most satisfactory answer can be given, but at this stage of our discussion we do not stop to indicate the strength and fulness of the reply.

We would now ask, How are we to regard this state of things? How ought we to feel and act? Various are the thoughts excited. Some are inclined to say, 'Surely there must be something defective in the evidence for the Divine origin of Christianity, when so much can be plausibly said against it. There ought to be no room for doubt. Why should not the Bible have such marks of Divine authorship, as would strike dumb any one inclined to question it? If nothing less be sufficient, why should not a voice from heaven proclaim to all, that the Bible is the Word of God, and that Jesus is the Lord and Saviour of men? Why should not miracles be wrought to put to flight the unbelief, which is at once so daring and so destructive?' Let such persons bethink themselves. They demand nothing less than an entire change in the constitution of the world. They have only to carry out their principle to its legitimate extent, to ask that man be so constituted and placed, that he cannot go astray, at least in matters vitally affecting his character and state. Letting the Bible alone altogether, who does not know that persons often go fatally astray? Every day of our lives we have duties to discharge towards God, towards our fellow-creatures, and ourselves. We are bound to do what is right, and true, and meet. To act otherwise is to commit evil and to inflict injury on ourselves and others. But we do act otherwise many a time. We know too well, how prone we are to err, and how hurtful error is. By one false step many a

How are we to regard this state of things? 'Something defective in the evidence.'

one has been plunged into disgrace, misery, and ruin. It might seem it would be better, if we were kept infallibly right, but we are not, and could not be thus kept, without a radical change in the government of the human race. We have enough of light to guide us, but not enough to compel us to pursue the right course. The evidence for the Divine origin of Christianity is amply sufficient, as we shall afterwards see, but if it were such as to compel conviction from the inattentive and unwilling, it would take man out of the position he obviously has in this world as an intelligent being in a state of probation.

The demand for miracles.

Would not miracles put an end to doubt? Certainly not. An eminent French writer has said that it was easy for Galilean peasants to believe they had seen their Master alive after his death and burial, but the Savans of Paris required proof fitted to convince enlightened minds. Let only such an event be submitted to them, let it be only attested by them, and no room for doubt would remain. Would it be so? The Philosophers of Berlin would declare the Savans of Paris to be charlatans, and scout their testimony. The demonstration must be given in Berlin. But if there, why not in London too? And the New World—is it to be passed over? Is not Boston also a leader in thought? Then, are not wiser and wiser men appearing from generation to generation, who stand on the heads of their ancestors? Why should they be bound by the testimony of a half-enlightened age? The demonstration must be repeated to retain its force. Thus it would be with every miracle, which can be conceived. It would require to be repeated in all ages and places, and the very repetition would take away its miraculous character. Besides, we are told that miracles are impossible. No testimony can prove them, and of course one's own senses would fail to bring conviction. In these days we are often reminded of our Lord's words, 'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.'

The ignorant and indolent.

When the ignorant and the indolent hear the din of controversy, they say that they cannot decide the right and wrong in the matter. They are satisfied to abide by the belief and ways of their Fathers. What their Fathers believed, they will believe, what their Fathers did, they will do. This is a very

simple mode of settling things, but it is neither wise nor safe. On this ground Hindoos and Musalmans are right in clinging to their ancestral religions. If Christianity were a system of mere outward ceremonies, resting simply on traditional authority, this mode of action might be proper, but as it requires intelligent apprehension and rational conviction, it declares mere traditional adherence to be worthless. Truth alone can do us good, and this is not the path which conducts to its attainment.

This deference to the authority of the Fathers is every now and then presented in a form more worthy of a thinking and reasonable being, than in the shape of the bare assertion, that our Fathers' belief, because it was our Fathers', ought to dominate ours. Some rest their defence of adherence to their ancestors on a ground like this, 'We ought to have a better reason for our religion than that it belonged to our Fathers, but we are helpless. We have neither learning nor science. We have neither leisure nor ability to read and study the arguments advanced. These are to us, as if they were not. We shrink from being left without a religion, and if we have one, what can we do but keep to that which our Fathers have handed down to us?' In such a statement there is no little apparent force. The mass of mankind are from their circumstances incapacitated for learned research and profound argumentation. If Christianity demand belief from all, it must present reasons for belief, which all can appreciate. There is ample room for learning and science in the exposition, illustration, and defence of Christianity, but many are most rational Christians, who have neither the one nor the other. Man would not be man, if he had not a conscience as well as an intellect. The moral part of our nature is continually perverted and overcome, but it cannot be destroyed. To take this away is to take that away, which is man's highest and best characteristic. Whatever directly appeals to this moral nature can be universally understood, and must wield great power on people of every country and age. Let us see how Christianity approaches man on this, the highest side of his nature.

The difficulty in the way of the busy and unlearned.

Let Philosophers bewilder themselves as they may, men cannot look on the world around them, without having their

thoughts at times raised to God above them. Let Philosophers wrangle about right and wrong, as they may, in the depths of man's nature he hears a voice testifying to a righteous God, and demanding a righteous character. The Bible makes this voice still more articulate, and largely adds to the instruction our moral nature suggests. When the earnest unsophisticated mind comes to the Bible, everywhere it meets with traces of a righteous and beneficent God. The whole book is felt to have a tone different from that of every other book. A book so Divine in its character is rightly inferred to be Divine in its origin. A book with such a holy, righteous, and loving tendency must have come from a holy, righteous, and loving One, and who can that be but the ever blessed God? Then submission to the teaching of the book brings light, peace, purity, and strength into the heart. The provision made for our spiritual wants, as announced in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is felt to be as much adapted to our need, as light is to the eye, and the atmosphere is to the lungs. The more the soul betakes itself to that provision, and partakes of it, the deeper is the conviction that none but God could have prepared it, and that to Him on its account eternal thanks are due. Effects so Divine, produced in the highest part of our nature, are rightly traced to a Divine cause. The impress of a righteous and merciful God on the Bible, united with its felt adaptation to our moral wants, is the argument which tells most on Christians, learned and unlearned, and which abides with them. The unlearned and the busy, who get hold of this argument, are not only real and earnest, but rational Christians. They need not however, and ought not, to confine themselves to this internal and experimental evidence, however strong. The historical argument for Christianity in its main points is capable of being put into such a form that it can be understood, and its power felt, by every individual of sound understanding and earnest mind. Satisfactory proof that Christianity is of God can then be attained by those who have neither learning nor science. Let only our moral nature be quickened and exercised, and the proof will present itself.

This is a
subject for
thought,

Many are ready to say, 'We have something better to do than to wrangle about religion. We have duties to perform,

and pleasures to enjoy. Many things around us interest and engage us. We shall attend to them, and hope that all will be well with us at the last.' Wrangling will do no one good, but it is very unwise to put aside the highest things, because they are often unwisely discussed. Things which have a vital bearing on our welfare are not divested of their reality, or power, by our inattention to them. On the contrary such things often receive increased power from our neglect. If your property be exposed to danger, and you take no measure to preserve it, your neglect will not ward off either your loss or its consequences. If some great good be attainable by effort, and you lose it by paying no heed to its attainment, you simply by inattention inflict injury on yourself. The subject we are now considering affects you vitally, and if you are wise you will strive to find out its merits.

Not a few allow that the religious question is important, but they declare it is insoluble. They maintain that no amount of effort can lead to a satisfactory conclusion, that the more we advance the greater is the darkness, and that it is therefore time to dismiss it finally from the domain of human thought and discussion. It is to be feared that in not a few of keen and cultured minds this has been the effect produced by the great controversy of our day, and a sadder effect cannot be conceived. Is it so that in despair we must give up all thoughts of God, of the human soul, its character, its state, and its destiny? Is it so that the future state is to be deemed by us as 'a land of darkness, as darkness itself, where the light is as darkness?' Are we to have from above no present joy, no happy impulse, no future hope? Are those subjects which in their different aspects have hitherto so cheered, upheld, restrained, and fortified human minds, to be henceforth banished from the world? This would be sad indeed, if necessary, but is it reasonable or right to give ourselves up to such hopelessness?

In the remarks already made in reply to those who maintain that they have neither learning nor leisure for deciding fundamental questions, we have anticipated what may be said in reply to those who maintain that these questions are in themselves insoluble. If no proofs will give satisfaction but those which have mathematical precision, we must let these questions

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alone, but in order to proofs of this kind being required on moral subjects, the position of man, the constitution of his mind, and the government of the world have to be radically changed. Questions with large moral issues are continually brought before the public, and are discussed in a way indicative of decided opinion and strong conviction, but neither side maintains it has arguments of mathematical exactness. In our daily life we cannot but decide on the moral aspects of things, in order to our personal action, and we are in many a case fully satisfied we have acted rightly. The moral aspect of the Bible and its moral effect, as we have been observing, prove its Divine origin, if it had nothing more to advance for itself, but it has much more. It has the strongest historical basis. The genuineness and authenticity of its various books are attested, as no books of such ancient date are. The many independent and yet convergent lines of evidence furnish a body of evidence well fitted to secure conviction. Difficulties will indeed remain, and from the nature of the subject and the limitation of the human mind we feel there is a vast field beyond, which in our present state at least cannot be trodden by us, but if we be stopped on this account, we ought to desist from trying to decide any matter with a moral bearing brought before us, and allow ourselves to be carried by the stream of circumstances, wherever it may bear us. If the various lines of evidence, which point towards the Divine origin of Christianity, after all only conduct us to a falsehood, we have often thought falsehood must have its own way, and truth has ceased to have a standing place on the earth. Those who, after a considerable measure of mental effort, owing to a radical defect in their method of study, have come to the conclusion that the religious question is insoluble, are much to be pitied, but those are still more to be pitied who have dismissed the subject in this fashion, because they are utter strangers to moral earnestness.

There is still another effect, a very notable one, produced by the controversy of our times. In noticing it we would merely indicate with all the brevity the case admits, as we are doing in reference to other points in this discursive Essay, the train of thought which might be pursued.

We are often told that all this hateful infidelity is the natural result of the exercise of private judgment, and that no certainty and peace can be obtained, till we become the obedient children of the Infallible Church. 'Let us only get under the shelter of the Church, and in its sure and quiet retreat harassing doubt and restless questioning will approach us no more.' We could perhaps listen to this plea more respectfully, if we knew nothing of countries like France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy, where for many a day the infallible Church had its own way, as Protestantism never had in any country. These countries are grossly calumniated, if society in them be not to a great degree honeycombed with infidelity in its worst atheistic form. Grovelling superstition and rampant infidelity seem to divide society between them. Protestantism was well nigh stamped out in France with a result known to the world.

Letting such considerations alone, we ask, Is there an Infallible Church in which we can find rest? Safety and certainty are, we are told, incompatible with the exercise of private judgment. How can we enter into the Asylum, into which doubt cannot follow us? We are at present without. How can we get within? If we be told that the Church says it is infallible, that therefore it is infallible, and that all we have to do is to submit, we must be eager indeed for the removal of doubt, and the attainment of certainty at any cost, if we bow the neck before the unproved assertion. The example of the ostrich in hiding its head in the sand, when pursued by the hunter, is not we think worthy of our imitation.

We are told we are not summoned to surrender to an unproved assertion. Arguments are forthcoming. Let us listen, "God has appointed an Infallible Church on earth, to which every creature should submit. Christ is the Head of that Church, and the Pope is His Vicar. Peter was appointed the first Pope, when he was addressed by our Lord, 'Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church.' To all the Apostles, and especially to Peter as their Prince, the keys of the kingdom of heaven were committed. Peter became the Bishop of Rome. He bequeathed his plenary powers to his successors in the Roman See, and these powers have come down

unimpaired to the present day." We need not proceed further. Much to the same effect is advanced.

These arguments are set before us to secure our allegiance for Mother Church. The Church demands our submission, and these are its credentials. We must examine the credentials before rendering our submission. How are they to be examined? Certainly not by the authority of the Church, for the question to be decided is, What is the Church, and what is its title to authority? At this stage of our inquiry the Church is not to us on the throne. We cannot acknowledge it as there, till we have ascertained its right to rule. On what then are we cast? Beyond all question on our private judgment. Why otherwise should such arguments be addressed to us? If however private judgment be so untrustworthy, is it not in danger of committing fatal mistakes in deciding on the arguments submitted to it? The statements on which our subjection is claimed are not self evident propositions. Every step of the argument is taken amidst doubt. Error is not only possible but probable, and if an error be committed, the whole structure of authority is based on shifting sand. If private judgment can be trusted here, it can be trusted every where. If it can interpret aright the words, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church,' it can interpret the words, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,' and can indeed securely advance to the interpretation of every part of Scripture. If private judgment can enable us to decide such great questions as, What is the Church? What are its claims to our obedience? Where does its authority reside? in the Pope and General Councils? or in the Pope alone? it is certainly qualified to decide every question which can affect our religious position. The only alternative to private judgment is blind unreasoning subjection. If persons submit to what calls itself an Infallible Church, simply because a body so called demands submission, or because they have been born and brought up in its communion, they have no better reason for their faith than Hindoos and Musalmans have, when they say for themselves, that they walk in the ways of their fathers, and act as their religious teachers and superiors direct them.

We have been speaking of the Church, whose pretensions are

highest, but the same argument in its general bearing is applicable to every view of Church authority, which would condemn the exercise of private judgment, and demand unqualified obedience. Rest is not to be obtained by blind submission to any community, however lofty its titles, and large its pretensions. Doubt banished by such means returns many a time with redoubled force, and then in its indignation at having been cajoled into subjection to usurped authority, it breaks the bonds of obedience altogether, and refuses homage to the authority, to which it ought to submit. Even when doubt does not return, and the longed for certainty is attained, the prized peace and security are not worth possessing, for they are of man's making, and not of God's bestowing. The mind is cramped, its proper freedom is taken away, and the path is obstructed, which leads to the one source of truth and light.

Church authority cannot supersede private judgment.

It is a vain dream then to suppose we can honourably and safely escape the battle of the day by sacrificing our private judgment, and giving ourselves over bound hand and foot to an Infallible Church. We have great respect for antiquity. We listen with deep interest to the lessons imparted by the great teachers of former days. We have a special respect for the views maintained by God-fearing men from age to age. We may well distrust departure from any doctrine, which earnest intelligent Christians have almost every where held. It would be arrogant folly to treat the past, as if it had handed down no legacy to us. In the last resort however each must decide for himself what is right and true. We may as soon part with ourselves as part with our individuality and personal responsibility. Each must give an account of himself to God, and each must now decide what he is to believe, and how he is to act, so that he may render his account with joy. Surely we need not be distressed on this account, as our Blessed Saviour, to whom we have to render our account, speaks to us in His word in terms as clear and intelligible, as His disciples either separately or together could use. To demean ourselves as if this were an intolerable burden, of which we must in some way or other rid ourselves, is to revolt at once against the nature with which God has endowed us, and the position He has assigned us. Do what we may, the burden, if a burden, cannot be

We must face the questions of the day.

thrown off. We must from day to day, in many instances, act on our personal judgment. Even if persons give themselves over, we think very unreasonably, to an Infallible Church, they must still exercise their judgment in interpreting its dictates.

These considerations bring us to the conclusion, that all who would act a worthy part must face the questions of the day. These questions seem indeed very formidable, and we may wish we had lived in a time when such unrest was unknown. The wish is vain. We belong to this time. We are bound to discharge its duties, and to take our part in its conflicts. May it not be however that we should be grievously disappointed, if we could be sent back into the ages we envy? We know well the pressure of our own age, we know its trials and perils, and are prone to exaggerate them, because in constant contact with them, while in our unacquaintance with other times we are prone to exaggerate their advantages.

Infidelity
in other
ages.

The wise man said long ago, 'Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this.' In some respects our times, notwithstanding their evils, are better than those which went before them, and in this very matter of infidelity it may be questioned if they be worse, if we go back a sufficient period. Looking for instance at our own country in the immediately preceding centuries we can scarcely take up a book of those times written from the Christian standpoint, in which we do not meet with lamentations over prevailing unbelief. If ever there was a man who weighed his words, and used only those which conveyed his calm deliberate judgment, that man was Bishop Butler. There perhaps never lived a man, who kept feeling more completely under the rule of reason, and shunned exaggeration in every form. How bad then must have been the state of things in the first half of the 18th century, when a man like Butler could say, as he does in the preface to his Analogy, "It is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted, by many persons, that Christianity is not so much as a subject to inquiry, but that it is now at length discovered to be factitious. And accordingly they treat it as if, in the present age, this were an agreed point among

all people of discernment, and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule as it were by way of reprisals, for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world." The Rev. Samuel Walker of Truro, an eminently good and useful man of the same century, may be cited as another witness. In reading his life one is startled by meeting constantly with complaints not only of ungodliness and immorality, but also of rampant and open infidelity. During the 18th century infidelity was very prevalent on the Continent of Europe, and all know how fiercely it broke out in France towards the close of the century, rushing from it like a deluge over the surrounding countries, and threatening to sweep Christianity from the face of the earth. In the preceding century, the 17th, no one stood higher in England for calm judgment than Isaac Barrow, and he in his elaborate sermon on our Lord's Resurrection speaks of 'this incredulous and therefore impious age.' We need not multiply such testimonies. Every intelligent reader knows them well. We might go from age to age, and travel from country to country within the bounds of what we call Christendom, and while ages and countries differ widely, we might find that no period and no land had been without unbelief, and that it has been even rampant in periods for which we sigh as times of faith and rest.

There is no doubt there has been a fresh outburst of unbelief in our country within the present generation. It affects certain classes that were formerly little touched by it in its speculative form. It walks abroad with an air of confidence, as if now its victory was to be complete and final. It boasts of its new weapons, as possessing a temper so polished and an edge so keen, that faith is sure to fall before them—has indeed fallen, never to rise again. We need not be confounded by these vaunts. Often they have been made in the past, and we know how they have ended. The weapons of unbelief have been again and again turned against itself, and we are confident this will be the case with the new weapons, of which it boasts.

The fresh
outburst
of unbelief.

It is a poor achievement to reach decided convictions, and assured opinions. The very fact that these are to be found on opposite sides makes it evident that they are wrong on either

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the one side or the other. When they are based on falsehood, the stronger they are, the greater is the injury inflicted. It is then of the utmost moment that we cherish the right spirit, and pursue the right method, so that we may have convictions and opinions accordant with truth. The Bible addresses every part of our nature, but as we have had occasion to observe in another connexion, it especially addresses the highest part of our nature—that part, which has immediately to do with truth, and right, and God. We cannot conceive a being with a moral nature, who has no intellect, no judgment, no imagination. These we undoubtedly have, and to these the Bible speaks, but the crown of our nature is its God-ward capacity, and to this every thing else is made subordinate. If this part of our nature be neglected, the Bible cannot be appreciated. The person who does not exercise his reasoning powers is utterly unfitted to estimate aright a closely knit argument, where every step must be followed, if it be understood, and its strength discerned. The person of little and unexercised imagination is utterly disqualified for judging the creations of the poet. The man, who is destitute of taste, is incapable of estimating works of art. In a similar manner the man who has no moral earnestness, who does not strive to cultivate and exercise the spiritual and God-ward part of his nature, is in no position for judging the claims of the Bible. He may read it, he may read books regarding it, he may be sure he is right, and yet he is as likely to have gone astray in his judgment, as the man devoid of imagination is, when he sets himself up as the critic of Shakespear and of Milton.

The spirit
essential
for the at-
tainment
of truth.

Here we have the explanation of the sad fact that not a few professed Theologians and others have read the Bible closely, and studied it much, who have utterly failed to appreciate its character, or even master its first lessons. Perhaps no one has been better acquainted with the history of the early Church than the Historian Gibbon was, and yet from his unspiritual character he completely missed the lessons which it teaches. One of Luther's famous sayings was, 'Pectus est quod facit theologum.' Many of his learned countrymen have come to the conclusion that the 'Pectus' has nothing to do with the matter—that the 'Mens' is quite sufficient, and we know what

the result has been. If the 'Pectus' had been allowed its place, the 'Mens' would have done its work in a superior fashion. The love of truth would have been paramount, and would have led to results equally learned, and far more trustworthy. We may say, 'Pectus est quod Christianum facit.' Mere feeling indeed is a very unsafe guide, but a conscience bent on knowing and doing the right fearlessly, and yet candidly and humbly looking at all the aspects of the subject, will conduct us to the truth, when the mere intellect would utterly fail. Let us in this temper approach the great subjects of the day, and we shall reach conclusions, on which we may securely rest.

As we have been speaking of the unbelief and the unrest of our times, we ought not to conclude without saying, that while there is reason for concern and grief, there is no ground for alarm. The ostentation and confidence of unbelief, with the fears of Christians, have in all probability represented the evil as greater than it actually is. An evil is often increased by great prominence given to it, and much talk regarding it. If however the evil were far greater than it is, our faith must be very weak, and our knowledge very limited, if we anticipate the triumph of infidelity. A system, which is simply destructive, which ignores the wants and aspirations of our nature, and turns men out into a dreary void, may be the fashion of an hour, but it cannot last, for it has no vital force. Notwithstanding its fair colours, it is too poor, thin, and vanishing to be grasped by the human mind. On the other side is a system, which bears the Divine impress, which has proved itself admirably adapted to man, and which rests on such strong and full evidence, that infidelity has yet to make its first effort to assail it in its combined force.

How assuring is the past history of the Church! What has not been done to destroy the Bible, and everything bound up with it? It has been pronounced an infamous book, too vile to be tolerated. The possession of it has been declared a capital offence. Many a time it has been thrown into the fire. Many a time it has been torn in pieces. And yet through all that storm it has lived, though in concealment. Such measures having been unsuccessful, others have been vigorously prosecuted. The stars in their courses have been summoned to fight

No need
for alarm.

The past
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the Bible
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Church.

against it. The earth has been dug in the hope of finding something which would falsify it. Past ages have been ransacked with a view to the contradiction of its statements. Its teachings have been caricatured and perverted to make it odious. Liberty, self-respect, common sense, morality, yea religion itself, have been invoked to assail it as their common enemy. As a variation to this violence, and in the hope of better success, it has been approached with much apparent respect, the knee has been bowed before it, while the attempt has been made to stab to the heart its statements and lessons. If these were only nullified, it would be the most estimable of books! Then in its name, and professedly on its behalf, falsehoods have been uttered, and crimes have been committed, in the contemplation of which our very blood curdles. Even its sincere friends have many a time done it deep injury by their injudicious advocacy, and still more by their failing to present a worthy embodiment of its lessons. If the Bible could have died, it must have perished ages ago. But it has not died, and cannot die, because it has in it the life of God. There perhaps never was an age, when it was so widely circulated, and so largely revered, as it is at the present time, notwithstanding the assertion so often and confidently made that it is gone beyond recovery, and that nothing remains but to give it decent burial. The everlasting mountains are an emblem of its stability. Many a time tempests sweep over them, and sometimes for days they are wrapped in clouds, but who supposes that on that account they are obliterated? The tempests cease, the clouds are scattered, and the mountains re-appear in all their grandeur. Thus it is with the Bible, and the living Church built on it. Let us never then give way to unworthy fears. 'He that believeth shall not make haste.' While grieving over the havoc made by unbelief, and doing all in our power in our sphere to counteract it, let us have a calm abiding confidence that for faith is reserved the final triumph.

Books
recom-
mended.

At the close of this Introductory Essay it may be well to attempt an answer to a question often put by persons, whose interest is excited regarding the questions of the day, 'What books would you recommend?' The literature is so vast, that it is difficult to answer the question. We would

venture to mention the following—Paley's *Evidences*, Paley's *Hæc Paulinæ*, Butler's *Analogy*, Conybeare and Howson's *St. Paul*, Isaac Taylor's *Restoration of Belief and his Transmission of Ancient Books to Modern Times*, The *Eclipse of Faith*, the two volumes published by the Christian Evidence Society—*Modern Scepticism*, and *Faith and Free Thought*—Cooper's *Bridge of History over the Gulf of Time*, the late Archdeacon Pratt's *Scripture and Science not at variance*, Pattison's *Antiquity of Man*, and *New Facts and Old Records*, and Adolphe Monod's *Lucilla, or The Reading of the Bible*. We will not extend this list. A better might perhaps be furnished, but these books are mentioned as at once easily procurable, and known to be good, though of various worth.

It is now the fashion to disparage Paley's writings, but it is much easier to disparage than to answer them. He is an eminently clear, candid, and judicial writer. His '*Evidences*' puts the historical argument very clearly. His *Hæc Paulinæ*, showing the undesigned coincidences in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. Paul, is a very interesting and satisfactory work to those who will read it carefully. How any one can resist the argument he adduces for the genuineness of these writings is to us marvellous. If the genuineness of these books be acknowledged, the facts must be accepted on which the structure of Christianity as a supernatural system rests. Conybeare and Howson's *St. Paul* is full of trustworthy information. No one should attempt Butler's *Analogy* who is not prepared to bring to it close and patient thought, but it will ever be highly valued by those who peruse it carefully, and master its argument. We have indeed been told of late that its argument is unsound, and even tends to Atheism. If Butler be followed, as he cautiously and firmly makes his way, and if the limitations he names be duly considered, a very different opinion will be entertained. Butler's argument, as he advances it, we believe to be irrefragable.

We need say little about the other books named. Isaac Taylor's works are full of interest to intelligent readers. Rogers' *Eclipse of Faith* made a great impression, when it first appeared, and there is in it not a little of permanent value. The Lectures published by the Christian Evidence Society take

up a wide range, and well deserve perusal. Cooper's *Bridge of History* and Monod's *Lucilla* are useful little works. The reader may be safely directed to Archdeacon Pratt's book, and the books of Mr. Pattison, for help in estimating the views advanced by such men as Sir Charles Lyell, Sir John Lubbock, Chevalier Bunsen and Mr. Darwin.

After all however, as has been often said, the book, which ought to be most read in defence of the Bible is—the Bible itself. Those commit a great mistake, who in their desire to obtain satisfaction neglect it, and confine themselves to other books.



In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.—**ST. JOHN.**

If the life and death of Socrates were those of a Sage, the life and death of Jesus were those of a God. Shall we suppose the evangelic history a mere fiction? It bears not the marks of fiction; on the contrary the history of Socrates, which nobody presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty, without obviating it; it is more inconceivable, that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that one should furnish the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality contained in the Gospel, the marks of whose truth are so striking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more astonishing character than the hero.—**ROUSSEAU.**

Without Christ all history is incomprehensible. He is the incomparable man to whom the universal conscience has decreed the title of Son of God, and justly so, since he gave an impulse to religion, with which, most probably, no other can ever be compared. Each of us owes to him what is best within him. He is more than the reformer of a worn out faith; he is the creator of the eternal religion of humanity.—**RENAN.**

THE CHARACTER AND CLAIMS

OF THE

Lord Jesus Christ.

In discussing the religious questions of the day the first place is due to the character and claims of the Lord Jesus Christ. There are obvious reasons for our giving this question the foremost position. We as a people profess to receive Him as our Lord and Saviour, and are called by His name. If we cease to receive Him, it will be well for us to abandon the name of Christian, as the retention of it can only tend to the delusion of ourselves and others. In the formation and development of our own and other so called Christian nations, even the most sceptical will, with some exceptions, allow that Christianity has had a dominant influence, and we are surely in a favorable position for judging of this influence, as shown by our past history, and present character. Then we are nearer to the time of Christ than to that of Moses and the prophets, and on this account the historical chain is more visible, and can be more easily followed.

The great question.

There is another still more cogent reason for beginning first with this great question. "What think ye of Christ?" was a question addressed to the Jews by our Lord. If they had answered it rightly, what a noble and prosperous course would have lain before them! Led away by worldly teachers and worldly minds, they answered it wrongly to their ruin. They misinterpreted their own Scriptures, and instead of receiving Jesus as the Messiah, they rejected and crucified Him, thus bringing on themselves untold calamities.

The character of Christ is for us as for them the great central question, on the solution of which all other religious ques-

tions depend. It is the crucial question, by which we stand or fall. There is no use in discussing side questions, while the main question is neglected. These questions may be endlessly discussed, but no satisfactory conclusion can be reached, while the great reason for trust in Christ as the Saviour and the Lord of men remains untouched. That great reason is His own matchless excellence of character, and perfect fitness for the Saviour's work, so perceived and felt by the human spirit, that His Divine character and mission are discerned, as if in the light of the noon-day sun, scattering all doubt, and inspiring the fullest confidence. Difficulties may be placed in our way, hard questions may be brought forward to perplex us, but above them all Christ's character rises up to our eye in its transcendent worth; and homage, love, trust, and service will be rendered to Him, till it be proved that our estimate of Him is a mistake.

The decisive question.

If any can show that in our supreme regard to Christ we are the slaves of delusion, the controversy is at an end. In that case we should deem such questions as the possibility of a supernatural revelation, the inspiration of the Scriptures, and the credibility of the Scripture miracles, so unimportant, that we should not deem them worthy of serious discussion. When the citadel is taken, the out posts become indefensible. On the other hand let the views entertained regarding Christ's glory be established, and they will draw after them a reverence for Scripture, and a belief in its statements, which will be firmly maintained in the face of the most plausible objections. The place due to Jesus Christ is then the question, which it becomes us to ponder at the threshold of our discussions.

Reluctance.

We approach this great subject with reluctance. Such is our impression of its greatness, and of our inability to do it justice, that we fear we may do harm, when we are bent on doing good. In the firm belief of His followers Christ is transcendentally excellent and glorious, and the advocacy of His claims, by those who are conscious of their own littleness and unworthiness, is not only felt to be inadequate, but seems almost liable to the charge of presumption. In our defence we can only allege our motive and object. The sun requires no help from artificial light to prove its splendour,

but if persons betake themselves to a gloomy cavern and close up its entrance, that they may dwell in darkness, the attempt to open the entrance and admit the light, while not adding to the sun's brightness in the least degree, shows the high value in which its light and heat are held. Similar is the aim of the Christian advocate, when he speaks for his Master, and this aim alone relieves him from the charge of presumption.

There is another reason for approaching this subject with reluctance. To a son who regards his father with reverence and love, and to a friend whose heart clings to his friend, it is often painful to speak on behalf of character. It is almost felt to be humiliating that even an occasion should arise to demand such advocacy. We cannot bear that a moment's suspicion should rest on those we warmly love. Christ is to His people infinitely more than relations and friends can be to each other, and the very call to speak for Him brings with it the bitter regret, that He is neither known nor loved, as He ought to be. He Himself calls us to this advocacy. This may well subdue our reluctance, and nerve us for the work.

We can suppose some reader to say, 'If the great questions of the day be approached in this spirit, the discussion will be worthless, for they are approached with a foregone conclusion, which makes the judicial weighing of arguments impossible.' If arguments be brought forward, which have no weight, let them be dismissed, but let not these arguments be regarded as unworthy of attention, because he who advances them is himself convinced of their worth. In a court of law, where evidence to character is required, those who have been long acquainted with the person whose character is questioned, and have lived on terms of intimacy with him, are alone entitled to appear on his behalf. In the case of disease those who have used a certain remedy, and have watched its effect, are those whose testimony is of value. The Apostles have been called 'interested witnesses.' What interest did they seek to secure? By giving their testimony they abjured ease, honour, pleasure, and wealth, and subjected themselves to toil, reproach, suffering, and death. If they had not believed what they said, how could they have acted as they did? In the circumstances,

Relief necessary to advocacy.

how could they have believed, had not the strongest reason for belief been furnished? The strength of their belief, as shown by what they did and endured, proves the truth of their statements, as nothing else could have done. It would have been simply monstrous for the enemies of Christ to have been His witnesses. Thus every one whose pleading for Christ deserves to be heard must himself be a devoted follower.

The character and claims of Christ.

It is time for us to leave these preliminary considerations, and to enter on our great theme—the character and claims of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have at present nothing to do with the historical argument for Christianity. We have not to discuss the authorship and the genuineness of the books called the Gospels. We have nothing to do with minute criticism. We have in our hands four separate accounts of the Life of Christ. We wish to confine ourselves to what they tell us, and to the inferences clearly educible from their statements.

Our Lord's self-assertion.

Jesus Christ, as set forth in the Gospels, has one remarkable peculiarity. He is invariably represented as speaking of Himself, of His origin, character, and work, in the loftiest terms. The more attentively we read the Gospels, the more we are struck with this peculiarity. Scarcely a chapter fails to furnish us with illustrations. He calls Himself most frequently the Son of Man, and uses the term in a way, which shows that he thereby separates himself from other members of the human family. 'The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins,' Matthew ix, 6. He calls Himself David's Son, and David's Lord. Matthew xxii, 41—46, and applies to Himself the words of the cxth Psalm. 'When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory.' Matthew xxv, 31. He calls Himself the Son of God. In the parable of the vineyard and the husbandmen the father is represented as saying 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be that they will reverence him, when they see him.' Luke xx, 13. He was the Son, while the prophets were only servants. With what authority does He in the sermon on the mount, after quoting Moses the great lawgiver, use the words, 'I say unto you.' How high are His claims on His disciples! He de-

mands love above that rendered to father and mother, son and daughter. Matthew x, 37; and in comparison with the love He demands, every thing held dear by man, even life itself, must be hated. Luke xiv, 26. How great is the work which He says He came into the world to accomplish! He came not merely to teach men, not merely to minister to their good, but to give His life a ransom for them, in other words to redeem them from the hands of the enemy. Matthew xx, 28; Mark x, 45. How great are the benefits, which He declares Himself ready to impart! 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Matthew xi, 28.

The reader of the Gospels need not be told that these are only a few instances of the manner, in which Jesus Christ uniformly asserts His own pre-eminence. It will be observed that no passages have been quoted from St. John's Gospel. That Gospel so abounds with declarations regarding the glory of Christ, that it has always been the object of special aversion to those who deny His Divinity. It has been even said that, apart from it, the other Gospels could not be plausibly quoted in favor of that doctrine. The passages just quoted show how untrue such a statement is. If St. John's Gospel had never been written, Christ's greatness, as asserted by Himself, would have been most manifest. St. John's Gospel is indeed full of Christ's glory. We quote some of the words there found, but need not give the references. 'The only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' 'I am the bread of life.' 'I am the light of the world.' 'Whosoever thirsteth let him come to me and drink.' 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou then shew us the Father?' 'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep.' 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.'

Such are the terms which Christ is represented as using concerning Himself. Are they not very remarkable? The notable men of the world, its philosophers, poets, artists, teachers, and heroes, have often been conscious of their superiority, and have sometimes been betrayed into the exhibition of it in a way, which has provoked contempt, but who ever spoke of himself in terms resembling those ascribed to Jesus Christ? The great conquerors of the world have indeed not unfrequently demanded

Such self-assertion stands alone.

Divine honours for themselves, and such honours have been rendered by idolatrous and servile nations, but we must remember that these conquerors were surrounded by those who worshipped as Gods the heroes of a distant antiquity, and to whom therefore there was nothing intolerable in the proposal to render worship to those, who had in their own day, before their eyes, achieved great victories. The names of these great conquerors survive, their achievements are known, but where is one now found to bow the knee before them, and to render to them Divine honours? Among those who profess to worship One Living God, as the Creator, Upholder, and Governor of all, where has one been found to assert such dignity for himself? Such self-assertion would be properly treated as the babbling of one, whom arrogance and self-conceit had turned into a mad man. The writer of this Essay once saw in a Lunatic Asylum a man, who believed himself to be God Almighty, and who became furious, when his claim to the title was disputed.

Not only among the worshippers of the True God have such pretensions been unknown, but they have never been advanced by those great men in the heathen world, who in unfavorable circumstances showed a loftiness of character, and a reach of thought, which have drawn forth the admiration of ages. We should have been greatly surprised to have found Socrates and Plato speaking of themselves as possessing a higher nature than that of other members of the human family. The character must be remarkable indeed, which can prevent the assertion of claims, such as the Evangelists ascribe to Jesus Christ, from sinking it into utter contempt. Ordinary excellence would not rescue it from the severest condemnation. Let us suppose the expressions we have quoted from the Gospels to be furnished to the most trained and powerful minds this world has ever known, with the demand that they construct a life so accordant with it, that no marked incongruity can be discerned, and he is a sanguine man, who would anticipate success for a literary undertaking, clogged with such a condition. Fiction has achieved wonders in depicting character, but it has not attempted to depict character with an abnormal feature like this wrought into it, and made consistent with it. Let us see how the Evangelists pass through the ordeal.

The account of our Lord on to His thirtieth year, as given by the Evangelists, is extremely brief. With the exception of a brief statement regarding His birth and infancy, and the mention of an event, which occurred in His twelfth year, nothing is told us regarding Him, except that He was obedient to Joseph and Mary, and grew in favor with God and man. This is the very period which men, with only tradition and fancy to guide them, would have filled with marvellous tales, as shown by the writers of what have been called the Apochryphal Gospels. The whole of that inviting period they pass over with a silence, which ought to be deemed a high testimony in their favor. They enter on the narrative of their Master's life with a simplicity and a quietness, which cannot but impress the candid reader. Each has his own mode, and to some extent his own order, of narrative. Each has his own style of composition. There are however characteristics they have in common. They use no general high-flown eulogistic expressions. They have no bursts of admiration at their Lord's goodness and greatness. With few and slight exceptions they make no comments on the narrative they furnish. The words and deeds of the Disciples are mentioned only so far as necessary to the recording of Christ's words and deeds. In their entire bearing there is a calmness, which in any other case would be considered a proof of thorough knowledge, and conscious truthfulness. The souls of these writers are so bent on the effort to set forth Him whom they call their Lord and Master, that self is forgotten, and yet they maintain so cool a judgment, that not a turgid word is uttered by them.

Character-
istics of
the Gos-
pels.

What is the career the Evangelists depict? What can we say regarding it? If men would only look at it, and ponder it, no advocacy would be necessary. If it does not speak for itself, no career ever did. Our Lord lived among a people, whose spirit as a people was as unlike His own, as deformity is to beauty, as darkness is to light. He was much in public, and came into contact with all classes of the community. High and low, Priests and Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees, Publicans and outcast members of society had full opportunity for observing His life, and hearing His words. The Evangelists tell us, in simple and unvarnished terms, how He acted, and how He spoke. The

Our Lord's
position.

conditions of His life were such as thoroughly to draw forth, and manifest His character. We find Him at one time followed by great crowds, who were enthusiastic in His praise, and ready to crown Him as their king. Again we see Him at the tables of Pharisees and Publicans, with every eye fixed on Him, and every ear for either good or evil open to His every word. We then find Him met by ensnaring questions, assailed by opprobrious charges, and pursued by malignant hatred even to the death of the cross. Such a life could not fail to elicit the character really possessed.

His character.

Let us look at the *character* manifested in such peculiar circumstances. It was a character so distinguished by dignity, excellence, tenderness, strength, and wisdom, that the fairest character ever conceived by man is as much dimmed by it, as a candle is dimmed by the sun. There is indeed no acknowledgment of guilt or unworthiness. There is no confession of sin, or even of imperfection. If there were, what would become of the words He is represented as applying to Himself? There is at the same time wondrous meekness. The diseased and the sorrowful are treated with the utmost tenderness. He went about as if He were incarnate compassion. He mingled freely with the people of His day. There was no withdrawing from human society. There was no practice of asceticism. He assumed no peculiar garb. He cast no slight on men's ordinary occupations. He held social intercourse with even flagrant transgressors, and yet His character, instead of being sullied, only shone forth with the greater lustre. While condemning what was wrong, He treated sinners with respect as possessors of a rational and moral nature, and aimed at forming in them a character, which would lead them to respect themselves. Sinners, thus softened and won, are treated by Him in the most kind and gracious manner. They were drawn away from their evil ways, just in the degree in which they were drawn to Him. There was no lowering of Himself, and yet there was a gracious accessibility, which won the fullest confidence. He answered the captious questions put to Him with a wisdom, which silenced His opponents, and denounced hypocrisy with a severity, which showed His indignation against that vilest form of sin. Yet there was no vindictiveness. He prayed for

His murderers that they might be forgiven. There is not an element in true excellence, which may not be found in our Lord's character in the highest degree. Qualities very seldom united in the same person meet and blend in Him with a symmetry and a fulness, which present a character of peerless worth. All this is shown not by vague eulogies, but by the life, which the Evangelists depict.

Christ's *teaching* is in full harmony with His life. He speaks with the authority befitting Him, who sets forth Himself and His mission in such lofty terms. 'He taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes.' 'He spake what He knew, He testified what He had seen.' He spoke of the invisible world, as one thoroughly acquainted with it, and yet with a restraint due to those whom He addressed, which furnishes a striking contrast to the descriptions framed by mere imagination, like those of Dante, Milton, and Swedenborg. He inculcated the discharge of all the duties of life, and placed them on the basis of love to God and man. Though born a Jew, and living in Judæa, He rose above the narrowness of His people, and treated with marked kindness those aliens who came in His way. He again and again intimated that He had come into the world to enlighten and save mankind. Mere outward service, the performance of mere outward rites, He declared to be utterly worthless in the sight of God. He insisted on God being worshipped in spirit and in truth. He taught that a radical change of character was indispensable to a holy life. 'Make the tree good, and the fruit good.' 'Except a man be born again, He cannot see the kingdom of God.' He showed in striking terms the characteristics of the kingdom He came to establish, as entirely different from, and infinitely superior to, the kingdoms of this world, and declared its sure though gradual triumph. That men might be drawn to God and goodness, He set Himself forth as the object of love, trust, and homage.

Christ's
teaching.

The *manner* of our Lord's teaching is as remarkable as its matter. He used the homeliest illustrations, and the simplest words, to set forth the loftiest themes. We see by His teaching, that human language, though in itself so imperfect, can become the medium for the conveyance of the highest truth.

The man-
ner of His
teaching.

The pathos of our Lord's teaching is as marked as its simplicity. In the whole range of literature, where can we find a passage, at once so touching, and so instructive, as the parable of the Prodigal Son? 'Never man spake like this man' was the utterance of one of our Lord's contemporaries, and the words have been re-echoed by millions in every succeeding age.

His mi-
racles,

We are not only told of the life our Lord led, and of the lessons He taught, but also of the *miracles* He wrought. If only these miracles could be put out of the Gospels it would be a great relief to many minds, and yet there would be in that case a marked incongruity in the narrative. One so glorious as He represents Himself to be, one speaking with such authority as He assumes, one teaching lessons so stamped with unearthly goodness and wisdom, must surely stand to nature in a very different relation from that of ordinary mortals. While submitting to its laws to show that He is man, there must be also a control over them to show that He is more than man. It is fit that His lordship as well as His subjection be manifest. He speaks of Himself as performing Divine acts towards the souls of men, and it is fit that He should perform those acts towards their bodies, which Scripture ascribes to God alone. 'I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal. The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.' 'Unto God the Lord belong the issues from death.' The Divine power thus described our Lord is represented as continually exerting. Not only so, but nature in its fiercest mood is obedient to His command. 'God commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.' 'Christ arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.' 'Christ rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased.' The miracles of Christ not only became the dignity of His person, but are in full accordance with the excellence of His character, and the professed object of His mission. There is nothing low, selfish, or capricious about them. He came to save men's souls, and to illustrate His work, and draw forth confidence, He cures men's diseases and saves their lives.

Such is the character of Jesus Christ as set forth by the words, deeds, and miracles attributed to Him by the Evangelists. The most sceptical will allow that the character is extraordinary, and has produced extraordinary effects. The heart of man has been profoundly moved by the character of Jesus Christ. The lowest, the most deluded, the most uncultivated have in innumerable instances been transformed by it, and raised into a life as elevated above that which they had hitherto led, as heaven is above the earth. Fierce barbarous tribes have under its gentle but most powerful influence been reclaimed from their savage ways, and have entered on a career of knowledge and civilization. Many of the highest minds this world has ever known, distinguished at once by great attainments and lofty aims, by calm judgment and moral worth, have joined their less favored brethren in giving their hearts and lives to this Glorious One. Devotedness to His person and service has been the life of their life. For Him they have deemed no love too warm, no reverence too profound, no sacrifice too great. Those who thus look to Jesus Christ as described in the Gospels firmly believe that in accordance with His own promise • He is with them to dwell and reign in their hearts. The character of Christ loses none of its attractive power by the lapse of ages. At the present moment there are as many hearts beating warmly towards Jesus as at any period since He sojourned in Judæa. How many are ready to echo Bernard's words, not as a mere poetic sentiment, but as a heart-felt longing:—

Jesus the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills the breast,
But sweeter far thy face to see,
And in thy presence rest.

Nor voice can sing, nor heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find
A sweeter sound than thy blest name,
O Saviour of mankind.

This reverence for Jesus is by no means confined to those who have become His followers. One of the most remarkable facts connected with the character of our Lord, as described by the Evangelists, is that it has forced those to render homage to

The effect
produced
by Christ's
character.

it, who have been foremost in rejecting His peculiar claims as the Saviour and the Lord of men. It might have been supposed that the assertion of claims so hateful to them would have led them to assail His character, but in it there is something so transcendently excellent, that praise has been extorted, where censure might have been expected. Every effort indeed has been made to pull down Jesus from His throne. Enmity to Him as the Lord of men has been unequivocally shown. His words have been impugned, but to His disciples, not to Himself, the impugned words have been ascribed. When He Himself is objected to, it is with apparent reluctance, and with general expressions of respect. In the few cases where direct fault has been charged, the very companions of the detractor have remonstrated with him. Voltaire, Rousseau and Thomas Payne may be named among those who have rendered this involuntary homage, and more recently Renan and Strauss. Porphyry, one of the earliest writers against Christianity, says that Christ must not be calumniated, for he was a good man; only those should be pitied, who worship him as a God. "That pious soul, which had ascended to heaven, had by a certain fatality become an occasion of error to those souls, which were destined to have no share in the gifts of the gods, and in the knowledge of the eternal Zeus." If such claims had been put forth for any other, whose life has come down to us, not only would they have been rejected, but dislike to the claims would have brought the entire character into disrepute. There must be then something most singular in the character of Christ to have prevented this natural result, and to have led those who never bowed before Him to acknowledge in high terms His wisdom and goodness.

Christ's
character
unique.

The most sceptical must acknowledge that the Evangelists have accomplished a literary feat, which no others have attempted. The character they have described is altogether unique. Members of a nation, that held the doctrine of one living and true God with what may be called a fanatical grasp, and to whom nothing was more abhorrent than the assumption by man of Divine honours, and not only members of that nation but deeply imbued by its spirit, they set forth one, who leads a human life, and who yet speaks of himself in terms resembling

those which the Prophets apply to the most High. A life weighted with this extraordinary condition they set forth with a consistency and a verisimilitude which make the claims, the deeds, the words, the entire bearing fit into each other so admirably, that men of the most varied characters have been and continue to be irresistibly attracted by it.

These Jews had no model to give them even a suggestion for the description of such a life. The holy men with whose deeds and words they were familiar, and whose memory they revered, such as Enoch, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Isaiah, and Daniel, are always represented in the Sacred Writings as mere men, the subjects of infirmity and sin, and entirely indebted to God's goodness for the excellence which distinguished them. If one of these had been represented as saying, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,' the orthodox would outstrip the heterodox in maintaining the passage must be spurious, as monstrously unbecoming the lips of the person, to whom it was ascribed.

The Jews had no model.

The Christian believer maintains that the representation of Jesus Christ entirely accords with the prophecies of the Messiah contained in the Old Testament, but he also believes that till the Messiah actually appeared, and led the life which had been predicted, no human being could have conceived how the different features in His character could have been combined and blended. So far were the Jews of that period from having done so, that they rejected Jesus, because He did not fulfil their notions of the Messiah, and their descendants to the present day have failed to see the accordance. The Evangelists had been imbued with the notions of their countrymen. While describing the career of Jesus they show in the most natural and truthful manner how different he was from Him, for whom they had been looking. Their previous views gave them no assistance in writing His life. Their prepossessions would have repelled them from Him.

Christ foretold, but not understood till His incarnation.

The Jews were intensely narrow and national in their notions, and yet these Jewish writers describe one, who, while loving His own nation, had sympathies wide as the world, and to Him they do not attribute one narrow word or deed. There is nothing hazy or contradictory in their narratives, as if they

The Gospels clear and explicit.

were drawing on the fund of legend or fancy. We find a firmness, a distinctness, and a consistency in their portraiture, which we rightly regard as the marks of a true description. This would be notable in one writer, but the argument for thorough truthfulness is much more than quadrupled, when we find four persons, each with his own marked characteristics, uniting in setting forth different phases of an extraordinary character, which is manifestly one.

We have tried to set forth facts patent to every one who will give to the Gospels a candid and intelligent perusal. How are we to interpret and explain the facts?

Christ the
Son of
God.

The natural explanation, which covers the whole, is that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the son of Man, the Saviour and the Lord of men, and that He actually lived the life, which the Evangelists describe. The Evangelists were plain simple men, with no extraordinary attainments, and possessed of no extraordinary talent. They were certainly incapable of inventing and sustaining a character, so peculiar and lofty, that no character resembling it can be found in the records of genius. Of mere men Shakespeare has perhaps never been surpassed in the delineation of character, but when we look round his wonderful gallery, we never find ourselves beyond the circle of humanity. Shakespeare himself was as ready as any one to declare that one had ages ago lived in Judæa, whose goodness soared infinitely above what he had either seen or conceived. The Evangelists have surpassed all other writers of biography, simply because they had before them a life, which immeasurably surpassed all others. They recorded words of heavenly wisdom and love, because these words had been actually uttered by Him, who came from heaven. They maintain throughout the air of truthfulness, because they were truthful, and were bent on setting forth the truth. If this be so, then Christ is the Lord and Saviour of men, to whom all should bow, and on whose mercy all should cast themselves.

The conclusion
should be
welcome
to man's
heart.

It might be supposed when we look abroad on men's trials, sorrows, perplexities, and forebodings, that this conclusion would be as welcome as it is natural. The greatest optimist must allow that things are not in this world as we would wish them to be. Man is subject to care, to sorrow, to dis-

appointment, to vicissitude, to vexation, to pain, in innumerable forms. He is subject to death from which all living-creatures shrink, but to man it is more terrible than to others, for he can anticipate it, as they do not, and he dreads the dark unknown beyond, of which they have no conception. Besides, in man's spirit a war is often carried on, which is more trying to him than all the outward afflictions, which overtake him. There is something within him aspiring to moral excellence, and yet there is a chain, which binds him down, and will not allow him to rise. Often he is drawn by inclination in one direction, and by duty in another. Many a time he knows the right, and does the wrong, at once thus gratifying his desire, and inflicting a deep wound on his peace. The judge within that condemns him forces him many a time to think of a judge above, that will condemn him still more. He knows not what is beyond the grave, and yet he cannot but fear there is One above, who will call him to account, and a world beyond, where the award will be carried out. The very uncertainty about the future cannot but disturb him. Even when conscience is asleep, and the future is not feared, there is often a strange restlessness and dissatisfaction, for which he cannot account. This may be found not only in those whose minds have been in a measure cultivated, but also among those, who by ignorance and sensuality have brought themselves down, as near as may be, to the level of the brute.

To man with such a character, and in such a position, it might be supposed Jesus Christ of the Gospels would be most welcome. Here is One whose entire bearing shows He takes a kindly interest in our welfare. Can we refuse Him our confidence? Here is One who speaks of the unseen world with a clearness and authority, which prove His testimony to be true. Shall we not give eager attention to a testimony so fitted to dissipate the uncertainty, which has saddened and broken many a heart? Here is One who does not solve all the enigmas of life, for their full solution is for wise reasons now withheld, but who throws on them sufficient light to break the fearful gloom, and who assures us the gloom will one day be dispelled. Shall we not rejoice in this cheering though partial light? Here is One who tells us we are guilty and deserve to suffer, but who also

tells us, how our guilt can be cancelled, and we can be reconciled to God, yea, that He Himself has come to effect this reconciliation. Shall we not eagerly avail ourselves of this proffered reconciliation? Here is One, who teaches us, as no other has done, our duty to God, to our fellow-creatures, and to ourselves. Shall we not reverently and thankfully receive these lessons, and lodge them in our hearts? Here is One, whose example is more instructive and impressive even than His words. Shall we not gaze on it, till we be transformed into its likeness? Here is One in the form of man, who so manifests the perfections of God, that we may behold them without being overwhelmed with the sight. Shall we not draw near to love and to adore? Here is One, who is ready to take us by the hand, yea to dwell in us, that He may support us in trial, guide us in perplexity, strengthen us in all goodness, and accompany us through death to the bright world beyond. Shall we not take His hand, admit Him to our hearts, and deem His presence and help our strength and joy?

and reason.

This Divine interposition ought to be as welcome to our reason as to our heart. Of ourselves we could have never anticipated such a manifestation of God, but now that it has been made we may perceive its eminent reasonableness and suitability. All His works praise Him. They bear the impress of His power, wisdom, and goodness. To those who regard them aright they declare His eternal power and Godhead. The mind is staggered under the revelations of science regarding the vastness of the universe. Are these innumerable worlds, stretching away into boundless space, inhabited? To this question science can furnish no answer. If they have no intelligent inhabitant, whatever else they may have, a little human child is greater than them all, for he has a mind capable, when cultivated, of appreciating their wonders, of realizing their greatness, of discerning their beauty, of being thrilled by their magnificence, while they are incapable of knowing themselves, or entertaining a single thought or emotion. Above all the mind of man is capable of seeing God's attributes manifested in these works, of communing with Him, and of aspiring to moral likeness to Him. Is it not reasonable then to expect the most signal manifestation of God in this

world to be made in His highest creature, and to be made in a way worthy of the dignity with which God has invested him?

Man's need seems to require such an interposition. It is reasonable to suppose that He, who has prepared for the wants of the tiniest insect the microscope has discovered, would make special provision for those wants of man, which directly spring from his superior nature, and which must be supplied, if his welfare be secured. We know well that man has a moral nature, which brings with it a considerable measure of knowledge, and which prompts him to noble deeds, but that person is surely blind to patent and startling facts, who does not perceive that in all ages man has had a craving for reliable knowledge of God and of a future state, to which of himself he has never attained, and has been the slave of base and ignoble desires, which he cannot but scorn, and to which he is yet kept in subjection. While the wants of other creatures are amply met, is no provision to be made for the most urgent wants of the highest creature on earth? Is man to look down on the full table spread for others, while he is left to pine and perish, because no provision worthy of his nature has been set before him? Is Nature, whose beautiful adaptations and provision have been so warmly praised, to fail, just when the field is open for her highest work? For Nature apart from her Lord we have no homage, but in Jesus Christ, of whom the Evangelists tell us, we see the very provision made, which is most urgently demanded, and the God of Nature appears at once in His wisdom and His love.

We are here met with the question, How can these things be? Can the Living God, the Creator and Upholder of these countless worlds, have allied Himself to human nature, and taken it into inseparable union with Himself? Is not this a great mystery? Undoubtedly it is. It is such a mystery that St. Paul calls it 'The great mystery of Godliness.' You say, you can have nothing to do with mystery. Then we say, You ought to have nothing to do with yourself. You must in that case part with your existence, at least with your intelligent existence. Animals have no sense of mystery, but it is difficult to suppose how man can be without it. Life—what a mystery! Who can explain it? Those, who think they can,

only show they do not comprehend the question. The union of body and spirit—what a mystery! It has been pondered with intense and prolonged eagerness by the highest minds, and the mystery remains. It is a great mistake to suppose that science lessens mystery. The opposite is the fact. Science gives us an enlarged acquaintance with phenomena, and thereby leads us to wonder the more at the forces, which lie behind these phenomena to mould and guide them. The Darwinian view of man, instead of decreasing the mystery of man's origin and nature, only deepens it, as, according to it, the lower nature goes on producing the higher, till after endless steps it takes such a leap, that a being is produced, who stands infinitely higher than that which preceded it, with a gulf between, which the one left behind does not attempt to pass. A most active mysterious power, working in a most mysterious way, is indispensable to the effecting of such transmutations. Mystery then hangs over us, do what we will, and if it be a proof of the limitation of our nature, it is also a proof of its greatness. Let us have proof a thing is, and we are bound to receive it, however mysterious it may be. The *how?* of many things, which affect us every day, can never be explained, but on that account to refuse belief to these things, and to act as if they did not exist, would be to prove ourselves bereft of common sense. The mode of the incarnation is most mysterious, but the fact is inexpressibly winning, and moulds all who come under its influence, as no other fact can do. When man himself in his nature, constitution, and history, is so mysterious, it would be indeed surprising, if there was no mystery in the person and work of Him, who had come to effect his restoration. The absence of mystery might well bring suspicion on the fact.

Nothing
taken for-
granted.

We have throughout the argument of this essay purposely abstained from touching the historical argument for the genuineness and authenticity of the Gospel narratives. We have asked nothing to be taken for-granted. We have looked at these narratives, as they are in our hands, and lying open before us. When mentioning the effects they have produced, we have referred to facts, too patent to be denied. We have endeavoured to show how welcome this manifestation of God in Christ Jesus ought to be to us, how reasonable it is, and how

unreasonable it is to turn away from it, on account of the mystery, which surrounds it. The historical argument is most sound and valuable, but apart from it we have shown what firm ground we have for belief in Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world. Our argument will receive increased force, when we come in our next essay to the consideration of the Apostolic Epistles.

To One who shows Himself so glorious and so excellent, so holy and so loving, whose character declares His greatness and goodness as really as the sun declares itself by the heat and light it sends forth, what can we do but give Him our heart and our all? Thus to act ought to be deemed at once our duty and our joy. The refusal thus to act is to cast away the best gift ever offered to us, and to subject ourselves to the severest condemnation.

Christ's
title to our
love and
trust.

We know well what has been said to impugn the views presented in this essay. We think the following statement would be accepted as a fair representation.

"Jesus Christ was a Jewish peasant, of high character, and remarkable talent, which raised him greatly above men of his class. He studied the sacred writings of his people, and was deeply moved by them. He saw much in his contemporaries, to draw forth his indignation. He felt himself called to be a teacher and a reformer. Considering his position, the lessons he taught were of great excellence, and were well fitted to impress not only his contemporaries, but also people of all succeeding ages. His character corresponded with his lessons, and gave them additional force. At the time of his appearing, there was a widespread and eager expectation of one, who under the name of the Messiah, would rectify all evils, and raise the chosen people to the highest prosperity. The question naturally arose, Is not Jesus the Messiah? Striking coincidences occurred, by which in connexion with his presence certain diseases were healed, and he was deemed the healer. This gave new impetus to the notion, that he was indeed the Messiah. It is probable that he himself was led by his success to the conclusion that he sustained this character. How far this may have been it is impossible now to say, but his disciples went at any rate far beyond himself in holding this belief.

The aver-
ment of
Infidelity.

By his invectives against the hypocrisy and wickedness of the rulers of his people he provoked them beyond measure, and they put him to death. Previous to his death, originating perhaps in ambiguous expressions of his own, the notion went forth among his disciples that he was to rise from the dead. The women who followed him, with the eagerness and credulity of their sex, caught at this hope. One of them, Mary Magdalene, thought she actually saw him, and heard his voice. She inspired his disciples with her conviction. They one and all came to the conclusion that they had actually seen him after his resurrection, and they published it every where. On this account they were persecuted, and several were put to death. This only inflamed their fanaticism, and the number of their adherents increased. Communities of his followers were gathered, and before their earnestness the old worn-out heathenism went down. These communities greedily received the loose stories, which were told, and which grew as they were told, regarding his miracles, resurrection, and ascension to heaven. The legends, which thus spread, were at length reduced to writing, and there we have them in the Gospels. The writers were weak uncritical men, who little anticipated the philosophical scrutiny, which would in a distant age expose their folly. These writings show their origin by the wondrous tales they record, and the contradictions they contain. In these days of science, when nothing but exact knowledge can stand, we reject these stories, as only embodying a myth, but through them we can dimly see a good and a great man, whose goodness we should respect, whose lessons, so far as they are good and applicable to our times, we should obey, who has had a powerful influence on the world, but whose claims as Lord and Saviour we utterly reject."

Unbelief takes many forms, but we think the statement now made expresses its general spirit.

Apolloni-
us of Ty-
ana.

As an illustration of its spirit we may refer to the use made of a travelling philosopher, named Apollonius of Tyana, who lived in the days of the Apostles, and attracted great notice in his day. He is first named as a famous magician. The first written account of him dates with the end of the second century. A writer of that period tells us of his healing power,

and of his goodness, as if to present a counter part to Him, whom the Christians worshipped. A hundred years afterward another writer, when assailing Christianity, treats as true the stories about Apollonius, which his predecessor had told. Very little is known about his teaching. If any dependence can be placed on what was written so long after his time, he assailed the practices of the popular religion, asserted the necessity of moral excellence, and based all on pantheistic doctrine. Some modern unbelievers have not been ashamed to adduce this pantheistic philosopher, of whom we know so little, as worthy to stand in the same rank with Jesus Christ.

We can only indicate by a few words the conclusive answer which can be given to the views advanced against the truth of the Gospels. No formal answer indeed would be needed, if men would only give a careful and candid perusal to the writings of the Evangelists. Such a perusal would show these averments of unbelief to be laden with improbability, inconsistency, groundless assumption, and direct contradiction to undeniable facts.

Answer to
Infidelity.

To those who refuse belief to the Gospel narratives we would say, You tell us it is all a myth, and you think this gives a satisfactory solution of the whole matter. "A myth is the development of prevailing popular belief or feeling in some suitable story. Wherever it appears, therefore, it bears the impress of the age in which it arose; and it can arise only in an age when imagination is so active that belief can hardly be said to be an act of judgment, when all improbabilities are readily ascribed to the present agency of Deity, and when credulity is at its maximum, as well in the narrator himself as in his hearers."* If this be a correct definition of a myth, in the life of Christ not one feature of a myth can be found. So far is it from being the development of a popular belief or feeling, that it is the very reversal of the popular belief of the time. What proof can you adduce that the Jews were looking for a Messiah, to whom Jesus bore any resemblance? It is historically demonstrable, that Jesus did not in any degree meet the popular expectation. A myth is the product of an ignorant age. This grew at a period of great refinement and high civilization, when Ro-

No mark
of a myth
in the
Gospels.

* Alexander's Christ and Christianity.

man dominion and Greek learning were moulding the nations round the Mediterranean. A myth requires time to grow. This sprang up so speedily, that scarcely did the events occur, which formed the occasion for it, when it took the shape it has ever since maintained, and it at once began to exercise a most commanding influence over innumerable minds. A myth has as a rule a very obscure origin, and throughout is encircled with the haziness of its birth. Here all is clear as day. Country, towns, villages, historical persons, minute particulars, and the exact period form the ground-work of the Gospel records. The language, the manners, the allusions all belong to that period, and to no other. The Evangelists have, if we may so speak, a distinctness and firmness of touch in their compositions, which are never found in the writers of legends.

Jesus
Christ a
good man.

You tell us Jesus Christ was a good and distinguished man. On your supposition, how can you maintain he was a good man? Is it the part of a good man to speak of himself as if he had no sin, or even imperfection, and to use terms regarding himself, which among a Theistic people are reserved for God alone? You reply, 'These were not his words. These words were ascribed to him by his disciples in the warmth of their admiration.' These words and those you receive as Christ's thoroughly fit into each other, and are as indispensable to each other, as the warp is to the woof. By what principle do you separate them? Then, what strange men according to your view must these writers be, as with the same breath they report words, which you acknowledge to be most wise and excellent, and words so monstrous that you indignantly reject them, these words too being put into Christ's mouth by persons, who had been brought up in the strictest Theism, to whom the ascription of such words to a mere man would be most abhorrent, and who had not in their Sacred Writings any model for such ascription! The Evangelists in your estimation must be most singular men, warmly attached to their own nation, and yet contravening its first principles, combining the wisdom, which could lay hold on the loftiest instruction, with the arrant folly, which gave utterance to the most preposterous claims.

Used - n o
unadvised
terms.

Do you venture to say that Jesus Christ Himself, led away by his unexpected popularity, came to the conclusion that he was

the Messiah, and used unadvised terms in setting forth his own claims, or in order to the more thorough reform of his people even went beyond his own conviction in the assertion of his claims? If you venture to think this, pray say not another word about Christ's goodness. Such conduct, especially among a people who worshipped the Living God, would indicate either intolerable arrogance, or downright insanity.

You tell us, There are miracles in all religions. You might as well tell us that brass can be made to glitter as well as gold. So it can, and yet they are entirely different. In what religion apart from Christianity do you find *such* miracles, attended by *such* instructions, illustrated by *such* a life, wrought in *such* circumstances, and attested by *such* witnesses?

Miracles.

Do you affirm in the language of one of your leaders, that Mary Magdalene gave the risen Jesus to Christendom? The disciples affirmed that they saw Him with their own eyes, that they heard Him with their own ears, that they had repeated interviews with Him, and saw Him ascend to heaven. This testimony they maintained in the face of reproach, of suffering, and of death. This was the foundation on which the first Churches were founded, and without a belief in which it is impossible to account for their existence. The disciples then, in your opinion, were either knaves or fools, and such knaves or fools, as the world has never known, bringing on themselves destruction by maintaining a lie, while branding with reprobat

Mary
Magde-
lene's de-
claration.

bation moral evil in every form.

You ask, Why should we believe obscure men like Mark and Luke? You may be sure such obscure names would not have been attached to legendary writings. To them would have been affixed the most illustrious names in the Christian Church.

Mark and
Luke obs-
cure men.

You meet us with alleged contradictions in the Gospels. It is as impossible for them to please you, as it was for Jesus Himself to please the men of His generation. When the Gospels relate the same events in the same way, you exclaim, See how these men borrow from each other! When the statements are varied, one adding circumstances, which the other has omitted, you at once assert a discrepancy, and find, you think, a proof of mere legendary writing. When events, bearing a resemblance to each other, but somewhat different,

Alleged
contradic-
tions.

are recorded by the Evangelists, or lessons of the same colouring and tendency, but thrown into another mould, are given, we are told that one event has been confounded with another, and one lesson has been mistaken for another. Many objections are the veriest cavils, showing the source whence they have come. The same style of criticism would reduce to myths the lives of Alexander the Great, of Julius Cæsar, and of Napoleon. The actual difficulties are such as might have been expected in the writings of four different men, thoroughly furnished for the work, but each having his own stand point, his own order of narrative, and his own style of composition. The unity of their subject is most manifest. The Glorious Being, whose course they describe, is set forth in different aspects, but His characteristics continually appear in the four books, and can never be confounded with the characteristics of any other person. With such compositions before us we can very easily leave unadjusted those little details, which affect not the value of the narrative. A slight un-supposed circumstance would in many a case remove the difficulty, but we need not be disturbed, because acquaintance with that circumstance is withheld. If there had been no difficulty in the interpretation of these writings, if they had so closely agreed, that the least apparent discrepancy could not be discovered, we should be certainly told that there had been collusion between the Evangelists, and that their testimony was on that account worthless.

Clouds cannot extinguish the Sun. The darkest clouds cannot extinguish the sun. They may for days cover it with their pall, but even then its light will struggle through, and in due time it will break forth in all its brilliance. The objections of unbelievers will never extinguish the sun of righteousness. Jesus Christ of the Gospels stands alone in the history of the human race. His declarations about Himself, His lessons, His miracles, His life, His resurrection and ascension, all fit into, and sustain, each other. We may as easily suppose that four Jews could light up a sun in the heavens, as that they could construct a character like this. If men be capable of such an intellectual and moral feat, why has no other attempt been made? If any thing of the kind has been done, pray tell us where and when. We must ac-

knowledge our utter ignorance. We cannot be put off with vague statements and loose analogies. We live in a scientific age, and must have exact facts. A white washed cottage among the trees may look at a distance as well as a palace, but a near inspection proves the difference. Let humanity be ransacked for its jewels, and let them be placed beside this precious one. If this be honestly done, it will be acknowledged with one voice, that Jesus Christ is the pearl of great price.

Believers do not call themselves rationalists, but they have a profound respect for reason, and wish to follow its dictates. The faith, which tramples on reason, does not deserve the name it bears. Our reason will not allow us to receive the negations of unbelief. We do not believe that human beings, possessed of sanity and ordinary intelligence, could have persistently pursued a course, which contravenes all the principles of the human mind. We do not believe that an opaque body could have turned itself into a sun, and for ages poured forth a tide of light. We do not believe that ignorance can do the work of knowledge, or folly the work of wisdom. We do not believe that loose legends, the product of dark and idle minds, could have turned themselves into a narrative, so firmly compacted, so homogeneous, and so true like, that the most sober and instructed minds have received it with unwavering trust,—these legends too having assumed this shape, on a stage so bright, and in a period so brief, that a mythical formation is inconceivable. We would as soon believe that stones, wood, and lime, would build themselves up into a magnificent structure. Our reason then compels us to accept the Gospel narrative. In accordance with a fixed principle in science we hold that theory of Christ's life, which accounts for the facts, and blends them into a harmonious whole, while unbelievers hold a theory, which dispenses with some of the facts altogether, leaves others unaccounted for, and causes hopeless variance among those that remain.

It is undeniable that there is something supernatural here. There is either supernatural truth, or supernatural falsehood. We cannot escape the alternative. If we do not believe that God has through Christ Jesus interposed to redeem mankind, we must believe that old Chaos has been unloosed, and has played such pranks, that falsehood has taken to itself the garb

Reason
opposed to
unbelief.

Super-
natural
truth, or
super-
natural
falsehood.

of truth, while truth has been forced to put on the rags of falsehood; all too in that case with the obvious tendency of driving Chaos back to his dreary abode. We cannot doubt which alternative to choose. We have not sufficient credulity to be unbelievers. Impelled at once by our reason and by our moral nature, we receive the testimony of the Evangelists, and with Thomas we fall down before the crucified and the risen One, saying, My Lord and my God.

The great
obstacle
to belief.

There is one obstacle to belief far more formidable than the obstacles we have been considering all combined. Jesus Christ demands our supreme love and our unreserved obedience, and against this demand the heart of man rebels. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." There is the demand, and we dare not lower it. To lower it would be not only disloyalty to our Master. It would be a deep injury to our fellow-creatures. It would be to hand them over to slavery and death. Christ's service, as all who have given themselves to it can testify, and surely their testimony deserves to be heard, is life, liberty, and joy. It is indeed a life of struggle, but it is struggle against evil, and aspiration after every thing which is good. Often it is a life of suffering and reproach, but love to Him who suffered for us can induce joyful submission. However difficult in some of its aspects, it is a life cheered all through by the presence of a gracious Saviour, and by the hope of a glorious immortality. If true liberty be spontaneous and joyful obedience to an enlightened conscience and a well-informed judgment, in Christ's service it is to be found in perfection. If true happiness consists in the development and gratification of our original nature, in the due order of our various faculties and powers, let us give ourselves to Christ's service, and this happiness shall be ours. From Jesus Christ we can receive nothing but good. Giving ourselves to Him there is no right feeling we shall have to suppress, no duty we shall have to evade, no real joy we shall have to lose, no real excellence towards which we shall have no impulse to aspire. If you refuse to give yourselves to Him we can only sorrowfully repeat His own words, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

“ When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you, from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me : and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning. * * When He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth.”—St. John, xv, 26, 27 ; xvi, 13.

“ From Jerusalem, twelve men in number went out into the world, and these uneducated persons, although not able to speak, did notwithstanding, through the power of God, point out to every race of men that they were sent by Christ to teach all men the Word of God.”—JUSTIN MARTYR.

“ If in things which are not directly of faith, I could cease to be a sceptic, I should give St. Paul, for head and heart, that throne in heaven which is placed next to Jesus Christ.”—LORD BROOK.

“ Whatever brings Paul into notice will ultimately bring him into triumph.* * His enemies may scourge him uncondemned, like the Roman magistrates at Philippi ; * * they may thrust him, as it were, into a dungeon, and fetter him with their strained interpretations ; but his voice will be raised, even at the midnight of anti-Christian darkness, and will be heard effectually ; his prison doors will burst open as with an earthquake, and the fetters will fall from his hands ; and even strangers to Gospel truth, will fall down at the feet of him, even Paul, to make that momentous inquiry, ‘ What shall I do to be saved ? ’ ”—WHATELY.

“ In the Epistles we find the different aspects of the truth apprehended and applied by men under various phases of experience, and with reference to various exigencies ; and while the Epistles thus form a practical supplement to the Gospels, they are complementary to each other, and fill up through their combination the perfect image of the faith, hope, and love represented by St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. John.”—DICKSON.

The Apostolic Writings.

We have in the New Testament thirteen Epistles ascribed to St. Paul, of which nine are addressed to Christian communities, and four to individuals. We have three Epistles ascribed to St. John, two to St. Peter, one to St. James, and one to St. Jude. Of these, two of St. John's are to individuals, and the rest are called General or Catholic Epistles, as they were addressed to the Church at large, with however, as will be easily observed, special reference to particular classes. We have one, the Epistle to the Hebrews, obviously designed for Hebrew Christians, which does not bear the name of the writer, but which is commonly, and we think rightly, ascribed to the Apostle Paul. We have also the book called the Acts of the Apostles, ascribed to St. Luke, which purports to give an account of the planting of the Christian Church, and the book of Revelation, ascribed to the Apostle John, in which through the medium of wondrous visions the future struggle and triumph of the Church are depicted. These with the four Gospels form the collection we call the New Testament.

The Apostolic Writings.

When considering the character and claims of the Lord Jesus Christ, we put aside all critical and historical questions regarding the books called the Gospels, and endeavoured to look at these writings, as they are before us, that we might learn what they have to teach us. We would in a similar manner look at the Apostolic Epistles. We are far from disparaging critical inquiry, and historical testimony—in their place they are most valuable—but it is well for us at times to hear what the books say for themselves, apart from extrinsic evidence. When occasionally we refer to facts outside these writings, it will be to such as are universally acknowledged.

Their intrinsic evidence.

If the Gospels had come down to us, unaccompanied by records of a later date, there would have been a painful sense of

The Gospels anticipate the Epistles.

incompleteness and failure. Nothing could be more glorious and attractive than the personage portrayed in the Gospels by His own words and deeds, but surely He was not to disappear, like a bright meteor in the sky, leaving not a trace behind. 'I am the light of the world.' The sun, the light of the world, shines from age to age. Is the light of the spiritual world to be at once extinguished? 'I am the bread of life.' Is the ample provision made for man's spiritual wants to be at once withdrawn? 'Whosoever is athirst, let him come to me, and drink.' Is the fountain, from which so refreshing a stream has burst forth, to be at once dried up? Christ had spoken much of the kingdom, which He came to establish, and in such parables as those of the mustard-seed and the leaven, He had foretold its progress, with evident reference to those predictions of the Old Testament, which pointed forward to a kingdom, that would subdue and outlive all the kingdoms of the world. Spiritual though this kingdom was to be, unmistakable proofs of its presence and progress would be furnished, as it was to be established among men, and to exert an all-controlling influence over their character and lives. Christ told His Disciples they would be His witnesses to all nations. He commands them to preach the Gospel to every creature. He foretells the sufferings they would endure, the consolations they would experience, and the victories they would achieve. Regarding the good deed of the woman, who had anointed His head with precious ointment, in answer to the murmurs of His disciples He says, 'verily I say unto you, Whosoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.' Great events then might be expected to occur among both Jews and Gentiles, after our Lord's departure from the world, and of these surely some record must have come down to us. The Acts of the Apostles and the Apostolic Epistles meet the expectation the Gospels lead us to entertain.

The Epistles suppose the Gospels.

If the Gospels require to be succeeded by records, setting before us subsequent events, such as we find the Epistles to be, the Epistles on the other hand throughout suppose the Gospels, or at least the facts, which the Gospels relate. If we had the Gospels alone, we should see a fountain, but no stream issuing

from it. If we had the Epistles alone, we should see a copious stream, but not the fountain whence it issued, and we should be bewildered to account for its existence. We have both classes of writings, and they mutually support and illustrate each other.

The Apostolic Epistles, with few exceptions, as we have observed, are addressed to communities, sometimes to particular Churches, at other times to Christians in general. Let us look at those written by the Apostle Paul. These are addressed to Churches planted in well known cities, such as Rome, Corinth, Thessalonica, and Ephesus. The Churches planted in these great cities soon after the days of our Lord grew and flourished, till in the next century we find them large communities. In the third century Christians were numbered by thousands in these places, notwithstanding the fierce persecutions, with which their enemies had sought to sweep them from the earth. These Churches looked back with reverence and gratitude to their Apostolic origin, and cherished as their most precious treasure the Epistles written to them by their great founder. If these Epistles with Paul's name had not been actually written by him, and received by those to whom they profess to be addressed, is it conceivable that at a later period they could have been imposed as genuine compositions on their successors? Could a whole community, many of whom were doubtless the descendants of the first Christians, and all of whom were connected with them by an unbroken chain, be so easily hoodwinked? When these Epistles were read in the Churches on the Lord's Day, in the second and third centuries, if they had been then first introduced, would there not have been an outcry against them, as certainly spurious, because previously unknown? The contemporaries of Paul alone could have been the first recipients of these letters, and from them they must have come down to succeeding generations.

Several of Paul's letters, such as those to the Galatians and Hebrews, were intended for a circle of Churches, and were doubtless communicated to each of these Churches. In 1 Thessalonians v, 27, we read, "I charge you by the Lord that this Epistle be read unto all the holy brethren." In Colossians

The Epistles were addressed to communities.

Some Epistles were intended for a circle of Churches.

IV, 16, we read, "When this Epistle is read amongst you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that ye likewise read the Epistle from Laodicea." We are told by Justin Martyr, who came immediately after the Apostolic era, that "On the day which is called Sunday there is a meeting of all (the Christians) who live either in town or country places, and the memoirs of the Apostles and writings of the Prophets are read." Origen, who came shortly afterwards, says, "Let us therefore take heed, lest not only when Moses is read, but also when Paul is read, the veil be upon your heart."

The occasions of the Epistles being written.

As we read these Epistles we see the occasion of their having been written. Sometimes the followers of Jesus were cruelly persecuted, and needed consolation, and encouragement. Sometimes practical evils broke out among them, they quarrelled among themselves, or fell into gross sin, in conformity to the idolatrous world around, and needed faithful reproof, and remonstrance. Not unfrequently false teachers appeared, and taught pernicious errors, to which, in their weakness and inexperience, they gave too willing an ear, and they required warning. Their knowledge was very limited and they required to be more fully instructed in the things of God. Every Epistle, without exception, contains important instruction, but the Epistle to the Romans deserves the place it has obtained in the Canon, by the fulness and the connected orderliness, with which it asserts and illustrates the great doctrines of Christianity, while throughout it glows with devout and ardent emotion, so rarely found in systematic treatises.

Their characteristics.

These writings are marked on every page by the features we might expect such compositions to have. They have all the directness and intensity, which persons throw into their letters, when writing to those to whom they are warmly attached, and for whom they are deeply concerned. We see mind in close contact with mind. We have those transitions from one subject to another, and those personal allusions, which we expect to meet in epistolary communications. Names are frequently mentioned, and facts of common interest are adduced. As we read them we feel ourselves in the region of reality, where every thing indicates an earnest, vigorous, and struggling

life. If we throw ourselves into the spirit of the writers, we shall have our souls at one time melted into pity, and then stirred into righteous indignation. Fiction has accomplished marvels, but it has never succeeded in weaving for itself a garb of such truth-like texture, as the writing from mere imagination of such Epistles would furnish.

Christians believe that the Apostles were supernaturally directed in the composition of these writings, but because inspired, their own individuality was not suspended, nor their own powers laid aside. We believe that God, in the ordinary operations of His Spirit on men's hearts, quickens their powers into new vigour, and thus enables them to do what in other circumstances they could not. Prophets and Apostles, by His extraordinary operations, had their whole souls drawn forth into most vigorous exercise, and in consequence their individuality is strongly stamped on all they wrote. The individuality manifest in these writings is a most satisfactory proof of their genuineness. They all use, though in different degrees, the dialect of Greek spoken by the Jews of that age, who knew the Greek language. Their spirit is one, their great aim is one, but how different is their entire manner! Could Paul write as John does, or John as Paul? Are not Peter and James very different from each other, and both different from Paul and John? We have more of Paul's Epistles than of any other Apostle. As we read them, do we not feel ourselves in the presence of that noble man, so ardent and keen, yet so clear in judgment, and strong in argument, so impetuous in temperament, and yet so tender in feeling, with his soul all on fire, and yet without a particle of the fanatic, or enthusiast? Who but Paul could have written these Letters? They show the stamp of the writer in a degree rarely found in the whole range of literature. We may with equal truth say, Who but John could have written the Letters, which bear John's name? No nice critical taste is required here. The evidence of genuineness is such as is well fitted to impress every sound and candid mind.

The individuality of the writers.

One feature in the composition of these Letters deserves special mention. While written in the language of the period, and containing allusions to opinions and events, which would not besit any other time, there is a careful avoidance of mere

The avoidance of technical terms.

technical language, and a keeping to that mode of expression, which the human mind naturally adopts. There is no entanglement with the Philosophy of that age. There is no ministering to minds of a peculiar cast, or a peculiar order of culture. The result is that these writings become easily naturalized among people of every nation and class, and retain their freshness from age to age. The new ideas they contain do indeed require a new phase of meaning to be attached to certain words, but these words are rare, their meaning is shown by the context, and the general stream of composition flows on, in the ordinary channel of human language. If these writers had chosen what is called a scientific nomenclature, their works would have long since become as unattractive to men in general, as Aristotle's writings are. In the history of the human mind it is well known that one system of Philosophy has succeeded another, and that every system has had its own language, which with its decay has become well nigh unintelligible jargon to after times. The writings of the Apostles were intended for the world, and in them a scientific form and scientific language have been wisely eschewed.

Written at
a transition
period.

The period of the Apostles was that of the transition from Judaism to Christianity, when the old was about to disappear, and the new was to obtain the vacant place; and yet, as so often happens, the old had an apparent strength, which strikingly contrasted with the apparent weakness of the new. The temple was still standing. The priests still ministered at its altars, the people still gathered to its festivals, and still observed the prescribed rites. The Jews gloried in their religious superiority, while groaning under their political subjection. The followers of Jesus as the Messiah were few in numbers, low in station, and apparently feeble in influence, holding their special services in upper rooms and obscure corners. The old seemed vastly stronger than the new, and yet it was ready to vanish away.

The Apostles
were at once
Jews and
Christians.

The Apostles were at once Jews and Christians, at once attached to the old system, and devoted to the new. In writings ascribed to them, we might expect to find every where the features of so peculiar a position, and so peculiar an era. The expectation is realized.

The Apostles felt and acted as those, who were loyally and heartily attached to their own people and religion. While condemning the unbelief of their people, they breathe the warmest affection towards them. They themselves, as we learn from the Acts of the Apostles, observed the rites of the Mosaic economy. They invariably treat it as of Divine appointment. By their constant quotations from the Old Testament, by their frequent allusions to it, and by the authority they attach to its teaching, as decisive of the question before them, they show at once their minute acquaintance with these ancient writings, and the profound reverence, with which they regarded them. The dignity of the Jewish nation, as the chosen people of God, and the depositories of God's Word, is often asserted, and continually supposed. Membership in such a nation they deemed a high honor, and a distinguished privilege. Their writings are tinged all through by their national training and feeling.

Attached
to, Juda-
ism,

The Apostles while Jews were the devoted followers of Jesus as the Messiah. By intercourse with Him, and by the teaching of His Spirit, they became instinct with the new life, which was breathing forth on the world. The consequence was, that while remaining Jews, they rose above the miserable narrowness and worldliness of their countrymen. We do not find a trace of the formalism and externalism, magnifying the value of rites and ceremonies, attaching vast importance to outward and unmeaning acts, while throwing into the shade moral qualities, which were such marked features in the Jews of that period. Throughout their writings we are continually taught that faith in Christ, showing its reality by the good works it produces, is the one thing indispensable to salvation, and that connexion with even the chosen nation will not, of itself, carry men one step towards heaven. This is as evident from the writings of Peter, John, and James, as of Paul.

and yet
followers
of Jesus.

The Jews looked with scorn on the nations of the earth. As the followers of Jesus the Apostles regarded them with very different feelings. They had learned that the kingdom of the Messiah was to embrace all nations, and to confer on them spiritual benefits, for the reception of which no submission to Mosaic rites was necessary. Those who had so long wandered

Love to
the Gen-
tiles.

on the dark mountains of idolatry were to obtain a place in the fold of the Great Shepherd. In the Messiah would the Gentiles trust. In time past they had not been a people, but now they were to be the people of God. They had not obtained mercy, but now they were to obtain mercy.

The peculiar position of the Apostles.

We see then the peculiar position in which the Apostles stood towards Judaism. While attached to it, and observing its rites, it was no longer to them what it had formerly been. They appreciated more than ever the revelation of God's will, which He had made to their nation, and the glorious mission, with which they had been entrusted, but in opposition to deeply-rooted prejudice they had been led to see, that the worship established among their fathers was only the scaffolding, to help in the erection of something infinitely nobler than itself, and must be taken down, as the new structure rose—that it was only the blossom, which must fall off, that the fruit might be formed and ripened.

They laid no rude hands on the old system.

It was not however the part of the Apostles with rude hands to pull down the old system. While underlying their writings we find the thought that the Jewish dispensation was preparatory and transitory, and that its observances would cease, no attempt is made to press on the immediate extinction of that which must soon disappear. No slight is cast on these observances, no call is heard for their cessation. They are treated with the tenderness, which might be expected from persons, brought up as the Apostles had been, and occupying the peculiar position which they did. There is not a trace of what has been called Jewish particularism, and yet there is not a trace of fanatical opposition to Judaism. When Jerusalem was taken, the temple overthrown, the Jewish polity destroyed, and the people scattered to the winds, never gathered together since as a nation. Christian writers could point, as they did, to God Himself declaring by His Providence, that the Mosaic dispensation was at an end, but in the transition period between the resurrection of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem, no such view could be expressed, and not a trace of such a view can be found in the Apostolic Writings.

Looking at that transition period on the one hand, and at the Apostolic Epistles on the other, are we not fully entitled, as

we see how exactly they fit each other, to draw the inference that these writings bear indubitable proof of their genuineness?

The subscriptions at the end of the Epistles deserve to be noticed. It is well known that, though ancient, they formed no part of the Epistles as first written. They are thus described by Paley in his *Horæ Paulinæ*. "Six of these *subscriptions* are false or improbable; that is, they are either absolutely contradicted by the contents of the Epistle, or are difficult to be reconciled with them. * * We see how easily errors and contradictions steal in, where the writer is not guided by original knowledge. I do not attribute any authority to these subscriptions. I believe them to have been conjectures founded sometimes on loose traditions, but more generally upon a consideration of some particular text, without sufficiently comparing it with other parts of the Epistle, with different Epistles, or with the history. * * If the Epistles had been forged, the whole must have been made up of the same elements as those of which the subscriptions are composed, namely, tradition, conjecture, and inference: and it would have remained to be accounted for, how, whilst so many errors were crowded into the concluding clauses of the Letters, so much consistency should be preserved in other parts."

The subscriptions of the Epistles.

Let us proceed to consider the accordance of the teaching found in the Epistles with that of the Gospels.

In the Gospels, as we all know, Christ appears alone in dignity, greatness, and goodness, even when most kindly intermingling with His disciples and others. He habitually speaks of Himself as entirely different from others, in origin and position. He is continually treated by the disciples, as possessed of a pre-eminence, which placed Him immeasurably above them all. He is at the head of the new kingdom, of which He spoke so much. The most aspiring of His followers did not aim at His throne. They only sought to sit at His right hand and His left. He was the King, and they were the subjects. He was the Master, and they were His servants. He was the Teacher, and they were the pupils. He was the Giver of good, and they were the recipients. He was the source of blessings, and they at best were only channels, through which the stream was to flow to others.

As in the Gospels,

so in the
Epistles
Christ is
pre-emi-
nent.

In the Epistles Jesus Christ has the very same pre-eminence. In the Gospels we are not left, even for a moment, to confound Him with Peter, James, John, or any other. In the Epistles we are as little left to confound Him with Paul or any other follower. These compositions set forth in the most vivid terms the dignity of Christ's person, the surpassing excellence of His character, the greatness of His offices, the preciousness of His gifts, and the perpetuity of His reign. These writers were so full of Christ, that they could not withdraw their eyes from Him, and could not find words sufficiently strong to set forth His greatness and worth. It is difficult to light even on a few successive verses, in which His name is not found, and something in His honor is not uttered. You can scarcely read a chapter, without meeting with either direct or indirect proof, that in the estimation of the writer Christ is above all others to be loved, trusted, honoured, and obeyed. The entire tone of these writings shows, that the Apostles had most cordially and thoroughly accepted those declarations about Himself, which, as we have observed, Christ had so often made. Only those who give themselves to Jesus, as the Son of God, as God manifest in the flesh, and as the Saviour of mankind, can sympathize with the views presented of Him in the Apostolic writings. To others the terms employed, and the illustrations used, must appear most inflated and unnatural, as passing the bounds of propriety, and even of common sense.

The illustration of these remarks, regarding the place which Christ has in the Apostolic writings, has furnished matter for many a volume. We quote a few sentences, that our remarks may have a more definite form.

The place
given to
Christ in
the Gos-
pels and
Epistles.

Christ said, 'Ye call me Master and Lord,' and ye do well. The Apostles delight to call themselves His servants, and when they use this title, they employ a word, which implies entire subjection. 'Paul a servant (slave) of Jesus Christ.' 'Ye serve the Lord Christ.' 'James a servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ.' 'Simon Peter a servant and an Apostle of Jesus Christ.'

Christ spoke of Himself as the Son of God. Paul says that He was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead. 'God spared not His own Son, but gave

Him up to the death for us all.' 'I live by the faith of the Son of God.' Peter speaks of the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. John says, 'The Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the Devil.'

Christ spoke of Himself as sitting at the Father's right hand. Paul says, 'God raised Christ from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.' Peter says, 'Jesus Christ is gone into heaven, and is at the right hand of God.' John in his vindication of Christ's glory says, 'Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father.' And again, 'He that hath the Son hath life.'

Christ spoke much of His love. 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' 'I lay down my life for the sheep.' Need we say that the Apostles dwell on this love with peculiar fulness and delight? 'Christ loved us, and gave Himself for us.' 'Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God.' 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' 'The love of Christ has a breadth, and length, and depth, and height, which passeth knowledge.'

Christ said that the Son of Man had come to give His life a ransom for many. The Apostolic writings are full of the doctrine, that we are redeemed, or ransomed, by the blood of Christ. 'We have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.' 'Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ.'

The Gospels set before us Christ's spotless character; and in the Epistles we read of Him as 'the Holy One,' 'the Lamb of God without blemish and without spot,' 'holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.'

Christ spoke of Himself as the final and supreme Judge, and in the Epistles we are told in various and impressive forms, that we must appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

In both
Christ has
the pre-
eminence.

We thus see that the Epistles in their representation of Christ and of His work exactly fit into the Gospels, and are in thorough accord with them. In both classes of writings Jesus Christ has the same pre-eminence. The principal difference between the Gospels and the Epistles is that in the former Christ speaks of Himself in general terms, as the source of all spiritual good, and only briefly and occasionally indicates the way, in which these blessings are to be bestowed, while in the latter His Apostles specify these blessings, and show in the most explicit terms their connexion with His death, resurrection, and reign in heaven. It was not fit that, till Christ had died and risen again, the connexion of these events with the salvation He was to impart should be fully revealed. In the blessings named as secured by Christ's death to all who should believe on Him, there is however not one, which is not included in the gifts, which Christ told His disciples He had come to impart. Liberty to the enslaved, sight to the blind, light to those who are in darkness, rest to the weary, water for the thirsty, bread for the hungry—what are these blessings but those on which the Apostles dwell—the pardon of our sins, the justification of our persons, the renewal of our nature, adoption into God's family, likeness to God's image, communion with Him, the sanctification of soul and body, consolation in sorrow, strength in trial, and final admission into heaven?

Both lay
down the
same plan
of life.

The narratives of the Evangelists and the writings of the Apostles are entirely one in the view they present of the character man ought to possess, and the life he should pursue.

Many who came to John's baptism asked him what they ought to do, and he told them to discharge aright the duties of their respective callings. They should show their repentance, not by forsaking society, but by leading a holy and righteous life. Similar was the instruction given by our Lord to His followers. They were to be the light of the world, but if they were to withdraw from the world, how could they enlighten it? The candle must be put not under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in the house. They were to be the salt of the earth. How could they be its salt, if they were not to remain in contact with the society, which they were to preserve from utter putrefaction? They

were to bless those that cursed them, to do good to those who hated them, to lend hoping for nothing again, to act like their Heavenly Father, who was kind to the unthankful and the evil. How could they act thus, had they betaken themselves to the desert?

Similar is the plan of life laid down in the Apostolic writings for those, who would approve themselves as the followers of Jesus. They were to remain in the world, while showing that they were not of the world. Husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, rulers and subjects, rich and poor, high and low are instructed in their respective duties, plainly indicating that these relations, instead of being abandoned, were to be purified and ennobled by the new life, of which in Christ they had become partakers. Paul tells us the world was so evil that Christ came to deliver us from it, and yet he tells his brethren they were not to go out of it. They were not only required to remain in it, but in the intercourse of life they must often meet with its most depraved members, 1 Corinthians, v. 9, 10. The one thing required of them was to keep themselves pure from the contamination of the world, and to honour their Saviour by holy and loving lives. They were to shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. They were to show forth the praises of Him, who had called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. They were to act in such a manner, that those might be ashamed, who had falsely accused their good conversation in Christ. In this view of the life to be led by Christians, James, John, and Jude are entirely at one with Paul and Peter.

The Divine wisdom of our Lord was strikingly shown by the mode He adopted for the reformation of society. He did not advocate revolutionary changes in the structure of government and society, but He laid down principles, which would permeate human life, and as they prevailed would eliminate selfishness and wrong from all its institutions. The work of reformation was to be effected within, and from thence it was gradually to work outwardly. His Apostles, under His guidance, pursued the same course. In their days the institutions and relations of society were corrupted to the core. Rulers were possessed of a power, with which no human

Both inculcate right principles, not revolutionary changes.

beings can be safely entrusted, and which they often fearfully abused. Masters were served by slaves, of whom they might dispose as freely as of their cattle. Wives and children had none of their natural rights secured. Such was the social condition of the Roman Empire. The mere overthrow of the social system would do more harm than good. The Apostles said not a word directly against the existing institutions, but they inculcated principles, which, as they were diffused effected a most salutary change, and which, though reviled and opposed, have blessed the world ever since. The reception of these principles has been very partial, and hence the evil which still prevails. When these principles obtain full scope, they will sweep away all wrong from the earth.

The place
assigned
to woman.

The place assigned to woman by our Lord and His Apostles ought not to be omitted, but our space will not allow us to dwell on it. To show the place assigned her by our Lord we cannot do better than quote the words of a gifted female writer. "The greater part of His life on earth was spent under the influence, and in the society of His mother. He cherished the kind attention of women to His own blessed person. He made friends of women. He shed tears with the sorrowing sisters. The first time that He is recorded as conversing with a woman He tells her of the water of life that satisfies the thirsty heart. He shames proud, self-righteous men by holding up the love and gratitude of a sinful but penitent woman for admiration. For the sake of loving mothers who wanted His blessing on their little children, He rebuked His own disciples for wishing them to be repulsed. His tender, filial love made Him remember His mother in His agony on the cross, and bequeath to her what He knew would make her richer and happier than aught else—"the heart next His own." The first word the Lord spoke after He rose from the dead was a word of tender compassion addressed to sorrowing Mary. 'Woman, why weepest thou?' " Read Paul's salutation to Christian sisters in the sixteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and you will find how well he had learned His Lord's lessons. The Apostolic writings breathe the sentiment that in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female. While woman is taught to discharge the duties, for which God had evidently designed her,

she is rescued from the low place, into which heathenism and corrupt Judaism had dragged her, is invested with her proper dignity, and is called to pursue a career of sterling excellence, high usefulness, true honour, and abiding happiness.

Love to God and love to man are the great principles affirmed by our Lord as underlying and pervading the life His followers should lead. No one acquainted with the Apostolic writings needs to be told that these are the principles continually affirmed as the foundation, on which the whole structure of moral excellence must rise.

Love to
God and
love to
man.

How are these principles to obtain and maintain their supremacy over our hearts and lives? To this great question the Gospels and Epistles furnish the same reply.

These
principles
are to ob-
tain their
suprema-
cy by faith
in Christ.

Our Lord taught His Disciples it was by faith in Him, and abiding union with Him, they were to conquer sin, and attain holiness. They must follow Him, believe in Him, cleave to Him, and He would be with them to guide and bless them. 'Abide in me, and I in You.' 'He that abideth in me, and I in Him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.'

The writings of the Apostles prove how deeply they entered into the teaching of their Master. While inculcating the great principles, by which men ought to be animated, and laying down the course of life they ought to pursue, they continually and earnestly set forth Christ as the fountain of all goodness. They teach that it is by faith in Him men are reconciled to God, that it is by union with Him they become imbued with goodness, and are enabled to contend with the evil within and without, that it is by the operation of His Spirit, drawing the soul to Him, enlightening the mind, and purifying the heart, a life of love to God and man is made to triumph over everything which would extinguish it. This is the peculiarity of Christian morality and its crowning excellence, that it not only inculcates right principles, and prescribes a right course, but that it makes it practicable for persons like us with a fearful downward bias, to rise to real goodness, by directing us to Him, who is at once God and man, who has all the perfection and fulness of God, with all the tenderness and sympathy of one who knows our temptations and sorrows, and who, in order to raising us to His own excellence and blessedness, is ready to enter into the

closest union with us, a union so close, that while personality remains unimpaired, the warmest friendship on earth affords only a dim illustration. This union with Christ, so often asserted in both the Gospels and the Epistles, is considered by those who know it not as a strange mystical notion, fit only to be entertained by persons of weak bewildered minds, but to true Christians it is a blessed experience, which gives them an infinite advantage over those, who have no such hand to lead them, and no such arm to sustain them. With such help they are encouraged to aspire to the highest excellence, of which human nature is capable, and to persevere in the face of the greatest obstacles, and the most formidable opposition.

We have thus endeavoured to show, as concisely as we could, that in all they advance regarding the person and the claims of Christ, the benefits He confers, the plan of life He lays out, the spiritual life He imparts and sustains, the Gospels and the Epistles are in exact agreement, and render mutual support.

The difference between Christ's teaching and that of the Apostles.

The different modes in which these subjects are presented are such as the circumstances demand. Our Lord in His teaching has a simplicity, a tenderness, an authority, a comprehensiveness, and a power, which the Apostles do not approach. He never speaks of Himself as a sinner, as needing pardon, as required to repent, while they constantly place themselves among their brethren, as sinners, who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ. They were taught by God's Spirit, but still they were men, and as we have already observed, their own individuality is never suppressed. It was fit that in teaching, as in every thing else, the Master should have the pre-eminence. While the substance of the teaching is the same, there is a prominence given in the Epistles to the nature of the blessings Christ came to bestow, to their connexion with His death and resurrection, and to the channel through which they can be obtained, which for obvious reasons is wanting in the records of His earthly life.

The facts of our Lord's life as set forth in the Gospels and Epistles.

In the Gospels we have set before us the facts of our Lord's life. Do the Epistles bear testimony to these facts? A consecutive narrative would be entirely out of place, as it would be doing over again what the Evangelists have done, but we should certainly expect clear indications of the facts being known and acknowledged. The expectation is realized. Jesus

Christ is continually referred to as a great glorious personage, who had a short time previously lived on earth, who had died on the cross, had risen from the grave, and had ascended to heaven. He had been born of the seed of David, according to the flesh. He had been born of a woman, born under the law. Man's salvation is continually set forth as inseparably connected with Christ's death and resurrection. Take away these facts, and with them depart the peculiar hopes they inspire, and the lessons they teach. To maintain that the Apostles, while believing the so-called facts, attached the main importance to the lessons, which the facts shadowed forth, and with which they had no necessary connexion, is to assail at once their piety, honesty, and common sense. In our day there are persons who think they can preserve the fair structure of Christianity without the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ, but the Apostles knew nothing of a Christianity, of which these facts did not form the foundation.

The force of the testimony given by the Apostolic writings to the facts of the Gospel narrative may be best illustrated by a statement made by Paul in his first Epistle to the Corinthians. The internal and external evidence for the authenticity of this Epistle is so overwhelming, that even German criticism in its most ingenious and perverse mood has scarcely felt itself equal to the task of questioning it. It is acknowledged that Paul is the writer, and that the Letter was written within a quarter of a century of our Lord's death. The Epistle was addressed to a Christian community in one of the best-known and most frequented cities of that day. In the Corinthian Church, as is clear from the Letter, there were persons, who while professing to believe in Jesus as the Messiah, in their zeal for Judaism were hostile to Paul, on account of his enlarged and liberal views. Writing to that community, Paul says 'I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures: and that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen on sleep. After that, He was

Illustration from the first Epistle to the Corinthians.

seen of James; then of all the Apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.' 1 Corinthians, xv, 3—9. In this passage strong testimony is given to the death and resurrection of Christ.

Paul declares that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. Christ's death on the cross to take away sin is the very heart of Paul's teaching. To this death he ascribes the redemption of man, and all the blessings, which redemption brings. In the eleventh chapter of the same Epistle Paul declares how the Lord's Supper was instituted by the Lord Himself. Most of those who had joined with our Lord, in observing this ordinance at its institution were yet alive, and were well-known. On from that upper chamber, where our Lord had eaten the Passover with His disciples, to the many places in which during the interval believers had been gathered in Judæa and beyond it, this sacred rite had been observed, not only commemorating the event, and declaring it to have certainly occurred, but impressing its unutterable importance on the minds of Christ's disciples. What stronger proof of the reality and importance of an event could have been given?

In the passage quoted the resurrection of Christ is most confidently affirmed. This is the one central fact, which when rightly considered, supposes every fact, and implies every doctrine essential to the Christian system. Let it be accepted, and we have no difficulty in accepting the incarnation of Christ, His life full of heavenly goodness and power, His sacrificial death on the cross, His ascension to heaven, His mediatorial reign, and His coming again to judgment. Paul with unwavering faith declares this great event had occurred. Let us again remember that the words we have quoted were written within the period of that generation. Paul cites as witnesses well-known persons, such as Cephas or Peter, James, and the Apostles, most of whom were certainly alive. He declares that Christ was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remained until that present. He then says that he himself had seen Jesus after His resurrection. Here we have surely firm ground on which to stand. Could Paul in a public communication have named as witnesses to a

fact of paramount interest a host of living men, some of whom stood high in the reverence of those whom he addressed, had he not been absolutely sure they were ready with one voice to support his testimony? Paul himself had seen the Saviour, and had by a life of almost unparalleled toil and suffering declared his testimony, but he thought it well, in writing to the Corinthian Church, to name as witnesses those, to whom not one of their number would object, and to whom they could easily refer. The direct inference is that the persons named did believe that they had seen Jesus after His resurrection, and had declared their belief to others. Among the five hundred there was not one found to contradict his brethren.

In the Essay on the character and claims of the Lord Jesus Christ we adduced the testimony of the Apostles to His resurrection. This testimony is so important that the reader must pardon our dwelling on it, as suggested by the passage quoted from the first Epistle to the Corinthians. How could the Apostles have believed Christ's resurrection, had they not witnessed the fact? Is it conceivable that they united to deceive the world, and with one mind persisted in the deception, though it brought on them bitter reproach and cruel suffering? If this be not conceivable, is it conceivable that they could have been mistaken,—that in reference to one whom they knew so well, and in reference to an event of such intense interest, they had been carried away by a woman's idle tale, and had kept their eyes so closed, and their ears so shut, when they ought to have been all eye and all ear, that they succeeded in befooling themselves into the belief, that they had seen that which they had not seen, and had heard that which they had not heard, the merest fantasy having been by this process turned into the most assured reality? Let those receive this view, who can receive it. Those called believers cannot muster sufficient credulity to accept any such explanation. Paul's declaration, which we have been considering, acknowledged by all to have been written, when most of Christ's original followers were yet alive, and asserting that which all believed, brings us very near to our Saviour, enables us to look into the grave in which He lay, and to see Him coming forth from it to the amazement and delight of His disciples.

The importance and certainty of this testimony.

The testi-
mony to
mira-
culous pow-
ers.

One other feature of these writings remains to be adduced. They affirm the working of miracles in a way, for which the truth of the affirmation can alone account. In several of these Epistles there is not an allusion to miracles wrought after the days of our Lord. The Apostles kept their eyes so steadily on their Master, and were so impressed with the message He gave them to proclaim—a message in itself so stamped with the seal of God, that it might be expected to make its way to every heart—that they seldom turned aside to mention its attestation by the miracles they wrought. In their writings we do not feel ourselves amidst a blaze of wonders, miracles bursting out on us at every step, and so bewildering us, that we cannot think of anything beside. In this respect these compositions bear a marked contrast to the legendary accounts we have of so-called Saints. The references to miracles are few, they are made only when obviously called for, but when made, how calm, how quiet, and at the same time how firm and unwavering are they! These references are found in writings, which unbelieving criticism, even in its most perverse mood, allows to be genuine.

Miraculous manifestations under the Old Testament were called 'wonders and signs.' This became the favourite term, by which these doings were expressed. Paul again and again affirms that these 'wonders and signs' were wrought by Christ through him. Writing to the Christians at Rome he says, 'I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.' Romans, xv, 18, 19. Writing to the Christians at Corinth, among whom he had bitter opponents, he says, 'Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds,' 2 Corinthians, xii, 12. Instead of quoting other passages of the same purport, let us ponder the last passage we have quoted. The genuineness of the Epistle in which it is found cannot be questioned. These words then were actually written to the Corinthian believers, and were actually read by them, a short time after

Paul had left Corinth. The term 'signs and wonders' could only be applied to such marked miraculous interpositions, as raised them entirely above mere happy coincidences, and events somewhat out of the ordinary course. The words were never applied except to events of a kind so peculiar and extraordinary, that their supernatural character could not be questioned. We hear of the marvels of science, but they are entirely distinct from 'the signs and wonders' of the Old and New Testament. Paul looks these Corinthians full in the face and says 'Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.'

What explanation are we to give of Paul's assertion that when at Corinth he had shown himself possessed of miraculous power? If you say that it was only in Paul's imagination these 'wonders and signs' were wrought, then you say he was bereft of his senses, was a weak enthusiastic man, the slave of the veriest fantasies, so domineered over by them, that at their bidding he exposed himself to the laughter of an entire community, by affirming that to have publicly occurred, which had never occurred. Those Epistles, in other respects indicating such a strong, sound, and far-seeing mind, were written by a weak bewildered enthusiast! But you say, 'That was an age, in which men believed in such things, and events had occurred, while Paul was at Corinth, which the credulity of the age had turned into notable miracles.' In other words, Not an individual here and there, but a whole community firmly believed that they had again and again seen things, in themselves most visible and palpable, which they had never seen; and had heard words, which they had never heard! Again we must say we have not credulity enough to receive this explanation. Finding the words, where we find them, and considering the circumstances in which they were written, they come to us stamped with a truthfulness, which cannot deceive us.

Looking at the writings ascribed to the Apostles, bearing, as we have seen, such indubitable marks of genuineness, so accordant throughout with the teaching of the Gospels, witnessing so strongly to the great facts of our Lord's death and resurrection, and calling on those whom they address to attest the miracles wrought in His name, we are in a position for appreciating them.

*
The inference from these facts.

Reason becomes the handmaid of faith in conducting us to a satisfactory conclusion. From the facts the great truth emerges, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Saviour and the Lord of men. This truth harmonises the facts, and accounts for them all.

We would thus state the conclusion to which these facts have brought us; The disciples saw Christ after His resurrection. They received from Him a commission to preach His Gospel to the nations, and they went forth to fulfil their commission. They received the promise of the supernatural aid of His Spirit, and the promise was fulfilled. They were thus enabled to conduct their enterprise with a courage, wisdom, and power, which astonished themselves, and those who had previously known them. While never performing miracles for their own benefit and ease, or to excite mere wonder, again and again, for the attestation of the truth, they put forth the miraculous power with which they were entrusted, in such a manner, that they could confidently cite whole communities as witnesses. In close accordance with their Lord's instruction, they propounded a plan of life, most noble and most practicable. Their teaching was immeasurably superior to that of the most distinguished Philosophers, because they gave forth the lessons they had received from Him, who came from heaven to enlighten and save mankind. God was with them, and prospered their work. Churches were established in spite of the most formidable opposition. A new life was brought into the nations, which if cherished by them would long ere this have raised mankind to the highest excellence, and the truest happiness. We cannot solve the terrible enigma, that human perversity has been allowed to check and frustrate the Gospel to so fearful an extent, but this we see, that down through the ages, wherever the Apostles' doctrine has been heartily received, it has blessed and raised mankind. Its happy effect on all who accept it is continually proclaiming its Divine origin.

To these writings, carrying with them their own credentials, and fraught with the best instruction, we give our unhesitating belief. We receive and treasure them as a rich boon of heaven.

The solu- What is the solution furnished by unbelief? Can it harmo-
tion pro- nize the facts, and put them into their proper place? We have

already had occasion to observe, that a theory is rightly pronounced to be false, which, while professing to account for facts, distorts and falsifies some, and leaves others unnoticed. Tried by this test unbelief is condemned. Here, as in reference to the character and claims of our Lord, it tries to put the facts, which even it cannot deny, into a procrustean bed, but no pressure and no violence can bring them into the wished-for shape. In many an instance one candid look at the facts and one breath of common sense are sufficient to scatter the mists raised by sophistical reasoning.

Writings from the earliest age acknowledged as those of the Apostles, and which have come down to us attested as no other compositions of that period are, have been thrown aside as spurious, because they do not square with the views of the critic. They are relegated to the next century, and yet they are utterly unlike anything, which that century has produced. To say nothing of the style in which they are written, they are pervaded by a lofty tone, and charged with a moral power, which place them immeasurably above the productions of the succeeding age, in which writings, bearing honourable names, display too frequently, amidst much which is good, no small measure of crudity and puerility. In the Christian literature of the Post-Apostolic period, what productions can be found, which can with any show of reason be compared to the letters of Paul, rejected by unbelieving critics?

Daring though unbelief be in rejecting compositions supported by the strongest internal and external evidence, it has not been equal to the feat of rejecting all the writings ascribed to the Apostles. The Epistles to the Corinthians are received well nigh by all. To the latter part of the Epistle to the Romans most unfounded objection has been advanced, but the Epistle itself is acknowledged as Paul's. The Epistle to the Galatians, throbbing we might say with emotion, and intensely individual in its character, has been declared by one writer to be a compilation of later times, prepared by some person, who had the Epistles to the Romans and the Corinthians before him; but even rationalistic writers have repudiated this notion. On the showing of unbelief itself, remarkable facts remain asserted in the books, which all receive.

The solution of the facts proposed by unbelief may, we think, be thus fairly stated :

The Apostles had been in immediate contact with Jesus Christ, and knew him well. He was a man of lofty character, far in advance of his age, but yet only a man, with no supernatural power, and no supernatural guidance. His disciples, who had seen much of him in both public and private, and might have been expected to have understood him thoroughly, became his attached followers. They were so blinded by their admiration and love, that till their dying day, at the expense of toil, reproach, and suffering, they proclaimed him to be the Saviour and the Lord of men, whom all should trust, and whom all should obey. For such claims there was no good ground, but it is acknowledged, that notwithstanding the great mistake into which their admiration had led them, the Apostles were men of sense and worth. Paul had not personally known Jesus Christ. He had been for a time a bitter enemy and persecutor of his followers. He had strong misgivings as to the course he was pursuing, which he endeavoured to suppress by still fiercer effort to destroy those who called Jesus the Messiah. Proceeding to Damascus he was overtaken by a severe thunder storm, and his heated imagination made him believe he saw and heard the risen Saviour. From that period he was his devoted follower.

The unsatisfactory nature of the solution proposed. The Apostles declared they had heard and seen the risen Saviour, and had been specially commissioned by him to witness his resurrection. They affirmed that there were other witnesses, alive and accessible, and in public documents they appealed to them in confirmation of their testimony. It must however on

no account be allowed, that Christ rose from the dead. This fact is the key of the position, and it would be suicidal for unbelief to give it up. Christ did not rise from the grave, but the Apostles, through some hallucination, allowed themselves to be deluded into the belief that he did rise, and that they had seen him. Yet the Apostles were truthful and sensible men !

The Apostles were not miracle-mongers, they did not gape after wonders, but they appeal to whole communities in confirmation of their statement that 'signs and wonders' had been wrought before them. In fact no miracles had been wrought,

and at best there had been only strange coincidences. Yet the Apostles were men of judgment and truth!

They belonged to a nation noted at the time for its narrow and illiberal views, and yet while warmly attached to their own people and religion, following in the steps of their Master they propounded a religion for the world, with principles and a scheme of life infinitely superior to the systems of the wisest of the human race, and pointing out to all a source of moral strength, by resorting to which the highest excellence would be attainable. They did this in a way which proved that they were not mere hollow echoes of their Master's words, but the intelligent earnest expounders of truths, which had become a part of their moral being. Yet they were only Jews of that period, in the enjoyment of no supernatural aid!

The Apostles continually spoke of Jesus with them and in them, as their life and light, cheering them by His presence, sustaining them by His strength, comforting them by His consolation, and purifying them by His grace. They were not enthusiasts or fanatics, but that was a mere whim of theirs, for when they thought they had Christ's presence, we are told, 'the sun looked down on a Syrian grave.' Still they were true and wise men!

As to the success of the Gospel in overthrowing the prevailing religions of the Roman Empire, we are told they had in all their forms become effete, the world was longing for something new, and Christianity opportunely came to fill up the gap. That most corrupt age eagerly embraced this holy and self-denying doctrine!

We need not proceed further. We have before us the explanation which unbelief gives of the facts, which it cannot but acknowledge. Let those who can accept it. As for us we unhesitatingly reject it. It is full of improbability and contradiction. Far-fetched arguments and fine-spun sophisms, however learnedly and confidently propounded, cannot hide its hollowness. It does not satisfy our reason, and still less does it satisfy our conscience and our heart.

The moral grandeur of Christ will ever secure to Him the warm love, the clinging trust, and the willing obedience of men, in spite of every effort to dim His glory. The moral

The moral excellence of the Epistles,

excellence of the Epistles written by His Apostles will ever commend them to those, whose sensibilities are awake, as stamped with His authority. Minute criticism, historical disquisition, and elaborate argument are lost on the mass of mankind. Their minds are too untrained, and their leisure too limited, for the appreciation of such things. All, however, except when embruted by sin, have moral wants to be supplied, fears to be allayed, doubts to be dispelled, aspirations to be encouraged, and the glory of the Evangelical narratives and the Apostolic writings is, that they meet us in a way which no mere human compositions have done, with a revelation worthy of God, entirely suited to our case, which we are bound to receive with gratitude and joy.



"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."—PSALM, cxix, 105.

"Men's works have an age like themselves, and, though they outlive their authors, yet have they a stint and a period to their duration. This only is a work too hard for the teeth of time, and cannot perish but in the general flames, when all things shall confess their ashes."—SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

"Thy creatures have been my books, but thy Scriptures much more : I have sought Thee in the courts, fields, and groves, but I have found thee in Thy temples."—LORD BACON.

"I have regularly and attentively read the Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion this volume, independently of its Divine origin, contains more sublimity and beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence than can be collected from all other books, in whatever language they have been composed."—SIR WILLIAM JONES.

"If these Scriptures, impregnable in their strength, sustained in their pretensions by innumerable prophecies and miracles ; and by the *experience of the Inner man*, in all ages, as well as by a concatenation of arguments all bearing upon one point, and extending with miraculous consistency through a series of fifteen hundred years ; if all this combined proof does not establish their validity, nothing can be proved under the sun, but the world and men must be abandoned, with all its consequences, to one universal scepticism."—COLERIDGE. *

The Bible.

In our previous Essays we have considered the characteristics of the Gospels and the Apostolic Epistles. We now propose to consider the characteristics of the Bible, as a whole. The Bible.

The subject is so vast that it appears hopeless to treat it in a worthy manner within the limits of an Essay, even if the writer were complete master of the theme, which no human being is. A great theme. The limitation of an Essay effectually prevents the full expression of one's views, and yet it has the advantage of presenting a powerful motive against the minute discussion, by which ordinary half-engaged readers are apt to be bewildered, and in favour of concentrating attention on those leading features, by which the Divine origin of the Bible is most strikingly shown. When the mind is won by the contemplation of these features, it is ready for the patient and persevering study of every thing, which the Book contains. To the great characteristics of the Bible then, as it lies before us, we would beg the reader's attention.

How vast is the literature, which has gathered round the collection, which we call the Bible! If all the books, treatises, pamphlets, publications of every sort, to which the Bible has given rise, in the way of defence, exposition, illustration, and application, and also in the way of assault, could be gathered into one place, where is the mansion sufficiently large for their reception? How small in comparison with that mountain of literature would be the Library of the British Museum, or any other Library that can be named! And still the heap grows. Not a week, we may say, not a day passes without additions to it. No human mind, however capacious and active, can attempt to keep up even a slight acquaintance with the additions this literature is continually receiving. If a decree were to go forth,

which none could resist, that the Bible henceforth was to employ no one's tongue and pen, what a blank would be caused in the region of mental activity—rather what a paralysis would fall on millions of minds! This interest in the Bible, so intense and sustained, without any sign of abatement, has no parallel in the history of the world. The very fact of this extraordinary interest, one would think, is well fitted to impress all who aspire to any measure of intelligence. He must be a soul-less one, who cannot but be aware of the fact, and yet is so unmoved by it, that he never ponders its causes, and never seriously looks into the Book, which has had so remarkable a career.

The Bible
a Book
and a Li-
brary.

We have spoken of the Bible as a book—as The Book. We have it continually in our hands as one volume, and we read it as such. As we advance we shall see there is a unity pervading it, which justifies us in giving it this title, and regarding it in this aspect, but in order to our perceiving this unity, and drawing the right inference from it, we must remember that in its human aspect it is a collection of books, written by different men, in different ages, in different languages, and when the series was completed, brought together, and declared to be in origin and character, entirely distinct from all other productions. In one aspect it is the Bible—the Book, and in another aspect it is a collection of books. It is at once *Biblion* and *Bibliotheca*—a Book and a Library.

The Bible
spread
over a
wide peri-
od.

At the first glance the Bible looks like a collection of scraps and fragments, having almost every kind of composition, which can be conceived. It is impossible to settle the exact time between Moses and the last years of the Apostle John, but in all probability nearly two thousand years had elapsed. Over that great period these writings extend, not in immediate succession, but at irregular intervals, several appearing within a short space, and then ages intervening, without any addition being made. There must be a marked diversity in writings which range over so wide a period, if individuality be at all maintained.

Composed
by differ-
ent writ-
ters.

The diversity is by no means confined to that which time has caused. The writers were very different from each other in position, attainments, and circumstances. Some were of high rank, like David and Solomon, several belonged to the priestly order like Jeremiah and Ezekiel, some had high attainments in

the learning of their day, like Moses and Paul, while others occupied a low position in society, and possessed little of this world's knowledge, like Amos the herdsman, and Peter and John the fishermen. Some lived in times of great national prosperity, like David and Solomon, others lived in times of impending evil like Isaiah and the Apostles of the Lord, others lived amidst the crash of national disaster, like Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, and others again lived amidst the joy of restoration, like Zechariah and Haggai. The greater part of the Scriptures was written amidst purely national associations, while some portions, like those which chiefly make up the New Testament, were written when the writers were brought into close contact and sympathy with persons of Gentile descent. There must be many points of contrast in writings so produced.

There is a great diversity in the subjects taken up, and in the mode in which they are treated. We have the plainest prose and the loftiest poetry. We have biographical details, national annals, laws, and institutions, didactic teaching, pointed addresses, entreaty, promise, expostulation, warning, the planting of the Christian Church, descriptions of the past, prophecies of the future. We have songs of the most varied character, some exulting in joy, others laden with sorrow, many resonant with God's praise, and others burning with indignation against ungodliness and wrong. In Job we have what may be called a Drama. In addition to this diversity of subject and style, the individuality of the writers is maintained throughout, even when the subject and the general mode of treatment are the same.

Diversity
of subject,
and treat-
ment.

The nation, among whom these diversified compositions were produced, differed widely from others in their history, laws, and polity. It could not be expected that the literature of such a nation would be welcomed by the other nations of the earth.

Produced
among a
peculiar
people,

Notwithstanding the diversity in the varied compositions, which we bind together and call the Bible, and in spite of the peculiar history and character of the people from whom they have come to us, it is an unquestionable fact that these writings, under the aspect of one book, have taken an extraordinary hold of the human heart. Vast numbers of the most widely

yet attrac-
tive to all
nations.

separated nations and classes, civilized and barbarous, learned and unlearned, high and low, revere the Book, and listen to its words, as the very voice of God. It has been translated into almost every language, and has penetrated every country. Not a day passes without witnessing thousands of families gathering around it as the oracles of God. The continued assaults made on it prove its power. It would be surely idle to assail a book, the pretensions of which had been exposed to the satisfaction of all sensible men. No book of any other nation has had a similar history. The Greek and Roman Classics are rightly and highly valued, and are read with pleasure by individuals of culture in different nations, but no one will say that they have become enshrined in the hearts and consciences of any community on earth. They are never regarded as forming one volume. The poetry of the Persians is much admired by some, but its influence on other nations is imperceptible. A few learned men in other countries study the ancient writings of the Hindoos, but we should smile if told that these writings had come home to the heart of any community in western lands. How few foreigners study the literature of China, or are in any way affected by it! Even when nations are nearly related to each other, it is rare that a work produced in one of these nations, especially when imbued with the spirit of that nation, becomes domiciled, among the others, as if of their own kith and kin. Yet the writings of the Jews have gone forth to every people under heaven, and from age to age have been perused by multitudes with reverence and delight, as if specially prepared for their respective benefit.

This fact stands alone in the history of the world. The Quran is no exception. A considerable part of it—the best part—is taken from the Bible. Had there been no Bible, there would have been no Quran. Then the Quran professes to have been written by one person, and at one period. Even in Muhammadan lands it has not the place, which the Bible has in Christian lands, for there has been a strong aversion to its translation, and without translation, it cannot have a home in different countries. One only requires to try to read it to see how little adapted it is for universal diffusion, and to find out the reason, why it has never for any length of time made its way beyond

nations of a low order of civilization, and living under a despotic government.

The unity of the Bible is as evident as its diversity. The sacred writers continually show their consciousness of this unity. At the very commencement the great principles are clearly enunciated, which are developed to the close. In the books of Moses we find the law under which the Israelites were placed, and the principles by which all mankind should be ruled. In the succeeding historical books, character and conduct are tested by that law, and as they stand or fall by it men are praised or condemned. In the Prophetical writings the views formerly advanced regarding the Divine character and government are clearly unfolded, and vigorously enforced. The Prophets proceed on the principle that their contemporaries were bound to obey the instructions, and observe the rules, which had come down to them from their fathers. As we pass over into the New Testament we find ourselves amidst a new order of things, but it is plain our Lord and His Apostles do not set themselves in antagonism to what had gone before. Our Lord declares that He came not to destroy the law but to fulfil it. He continually appeals to the Scriptures as invested with an authority, which ought not to be questioned. The writings of the Apostles abound with quotations from the Old Testament, not merely as illustrating but authorizing the lessons which they taught. The great change in outward worship is represented as required by that revelation, which had commanded the observance of numerous and laborious rites. As the blossom must make way for the fruit, so previous institutions must give place to the spiritual service of the new dispensation.

The unity
of the Bi-
ble.

Let us consider wherein this unity consists. If we do so aright, we shall perceive the reason why the Bible has taken so peculiar a hold of the human heart.

In the first three chapters of Genesis we find the germ of every great principle unfolded and enforced throughout the Bible. We are there told that God is the Creator of all things. The essential distinction between the Creator and the creature is affirmed with the utmost plainness. We are told of man's pre-eminence in creation, because made in God's image, and

The germ
of the Bi-
ble.

placed over His works. We are told of the communion he was privileged to hold with his God. We are told of his disobedience and fall. We are told of his expulsion from Eden, and of the promise of the Deliverer. What is the Bible but the uniform consistent development of these great principles and facts? They pervade and irradiate it. The Book has a befitting close, when it tells of man's restoration to Paradise, and to unending uninterrupted communion with his Father and his God.

The opening chapters of Genesis.

Gladly would we linger over the opening chapters of Genesis, if the limits of our Essay would permit. They have been called the opprobrium of Theology, but to those who perceive their worth they are a glorious porch to a glorious mansion. If they had come down to us alone from a remote antiquity, how highly would they have been prized! How great is the subject, and what simplicity, majesty, conciseness, fulness, and reserve characterize its treatment! What would be our surprise to meet such a statement in an old Egyptian, Assyrian, Phœnician, or Greek writing! One true and living God appears. His attributes are not named, but they are seen in action, and thus impress us more than the most sublime words would do. We find progress, but we see God at once in the creative and formative process. We find all things placed by God under the laws requisite for their preservation and proper use. We see man placed over all, endowed with a nature so lofty, that he can hold communion with his Maker, when obedient rejoicing in his Maker's smile, when disobedient trembling under His frown. No sooner is the bright scene darkened than the ray of promise penetrates it to dissipate the gloom, and lead man to anticipate in the far future an unclouded day. The exact interpretation of some parts of these chapters may elude us, but the great principles they teach are so vividly set forth, that they can be easily perceived by every candid and careful reader.

The great factors in religion.

In every religious system the two great factors, if we may so speak, are God and man. The questions to be decided are, What is God's character? What is His relation to man? What does He require of man and do for him? What is man's relation to God? These are the questions, which the Bible answers.

The Bible opens with the grand words, 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.' Nothing is said about His Eternity, Immensity, or Incomprehensibility. There is not a word about the *Tò 'ón*, the Essence of the Greeks, or the Nirgun, the One without attributes, of the Hindoos. He appears as the Creator, and we are called on to adore Him. Thus it is throughout the Bible. There is a remarkable absence of speculation regarding the Divine nature. There is no formal description and discussion of God's attributes. We are told of His doings to the world, and especially of His government of man. As we behold His doings, and contemplate His government, we are taught to regard Him as the All-Powerful, All-Wise, All-Knowing, All-Righteous, and All-Loving One. We see Him possessed of all natural and moral perfection, altogether independent of His creatures, yet ever with them, watching over them, providing for their wants, and promoting their good, while showing His displeasure at sin and wrong. In the Divine character as described in the Bible there is every thing to secure our most profound reverence, and win our warmest love.

Much has been said about the human representations of God found in the Bible. He is spoken of as seeing, hearing, smelling, touching. We read of His face, His ears, His eyes, His nostrils. We are told that on one remarkable occasion Moses saw His back parts, because unable to bear the splendour of His face. We are told that God is grieved, that He is angry, that He repents, that He is joyful, that He is moved with compassion. Some have concluded from these statements, that according to the Bible God is a magnified man, and they pronounce such representations to be utterly unworthy of Him. Here as on other points we may find that the foolishness of God is wiser than men. There are considerations to help us in estimating aright what has been called the anthropomorphism of the Bible. 1st.—*Man does resemble God.* Irrational creatures are God's workmanship as really as we are, but they have not, and cannot have the slightest conception of Him, while we, because made in His image, are capable of comprehending Him in some measure. If the ideas indicated by such words, as power, knowledge, wisdom, righteousness, love, were utterly foreign to our

God seen
in His
works.

HUMAN
representations of
God.

consciousness, we could attach no meaning to these terms, when applied to God, or we should attach a wrong meaning to them. We see the dignity of our nature in the fact, that we can comprehend in a measure the Divine attributes, because we find the same qualities in ourselves, though in an infinitely lower degree.

2nd.—*It is indispensable that God be realized by us, if we would love, trust, and serve Him.* He is often to us a God who is far off, and not a God who is nigh. There is a danger of His being to us so incomprehensible, so dim, so shadowy, that we can feel no nearness to Him, and hold no communion with Him. In His wisdom and condescension He uses regarding Himself the representations, to which we have referred, that the veil which conceals Him from our view may be as much as possible lifted up, so that we may know Him, be drawn to Him, dwell in His presence, and rejoice in Him as our Father and our God. We obtain our knowledge of sensible objects through the medium of our senses. God requires no such medium, but to make us realize the fact that He knows us and all around us, He graciously speaks of Himself as seeing and hearing. We know what anger, grief, joy, and compassion are. In the Divine nature there is doubtless something analogous to these feelings, or such expressions would not have been used, but they are entirely free from the imperfection so characteristic of every thing which belongs to man, and are in thorough harmony with perfect knowledge, perfect excellence, and perfect happiness. If no such representations of God had been given in the Bible, it would have never touched the heart of humanity, as it has done. Philosophers have often debated about the mysteries of the Divine nature, till they have landed themselves in a mere mental abstraction, or in other words, in blank atheism. They have set themselves against bringing God down to man's level, and they have ended by banishing God, so far as they could, out of the universe, and out of existence.

3rd.—*In the Bible every precaution is taken against the abuse of these human presentations of God.* They are intended to bring God near to our apprehension and our heart, but their purpose would be defeated, if by them God was to be thought of as one of ourselves. To prevent this effect, we have views continually presented to us of His spiritual nature, of His majesty, of His holiness, of His un-

speaking and inconceivable greatness, which effectually guard us against low and unworthy notions. The most intelligent, thoughtful, and devout readers of the Bible have been greatly helped in apprehending and loving Him, by the human representations of His character and doings, which His word contains, but to them these representations have been so tempered by the general teaching of the Book, that they have bowed down before Him in the lowliest adoration, while their hearts have risen to Him in warmest love. 4thly—*Material images and symbols of God are strictly forbidden in His Word, and thus provision is made against the literal acceptance of the representations, which He had in His condescension employed.* We have not to go far for the reason of this prohibition. Representations by word to our imagination may be helpful to our apprehension and faith, which would be very hurtful, if embodied before the eye in material images. In that case they are turned from illustrations into hard reality, and materialize and debase our notions of the Divine nature and ways. The tendency of idolatry has ever been to bring God down to our level, and thus strip Him of His glory, under the pretext of lifting us by the aid of symbols to an acquaintance with Him. What an awe-inspiring description of our Saviour's glory have we in the first chapter of the book of Revelation, but how entirely would its proper effect be defeated, if the Painter and Sculptor were to attempt the presentation of it to the bodily eye, and we were to give ourselves up to the influence of their productions!

While in the Bible God is set forth in His matchless glory and excellence, the greatness of the nature with which man is endowed is continually asserted. We are taught that he was made to be God's servant, subject and child—to listen to His voice, to do His will, and to be blessed with His Fatherly love and care. But man has left His God, and we see its effects in his guilt, depravity, and misery. In the Bible these two things are ever kept before us. We see man's better nature protesting against the degradation into which sin has dragged it, and we see his lower nature contending with the higher, and gaining over it many a miserable victory. Does not the Bible here give a voice to man's struggles from age to age, wherever he has been, and in whatever circumstances he has been placed?

The greatness of man's nature.

The relations of God and man to each other.

The Bible is largely taken up with describing the relations of God and man to each other, and God's dealings towards man in consequence of these relations. This may be said to be the chief topic of the Bible, and in its various bearings we meet it from the beginning to the end. This gives unity to the Bible more perhaps than anything else does. Sin had speedily and sadly interrupted the intercourse begun in Paradise. God most graciously renewed the broken fellowship. In Seth's days men began to call on the name of the Lord, and His entire Word tells us He is near to those who call on Him. Enoch walked with God, which would have been impossible, had God not admitted him to fellowship with Himself. Noah was instructed by God what he ought to do, to save himself and household from the impending catastrophe. How highly favoured Abraham was! So close was his communion with God, and so frequent and full were the communications made to him, that he was called the friend of God—the designation by which in Bible lands he is best known to the present day. What need is there for details? The names of Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, and the Prophets will at once remind us of the close relation into which God has entered with members of the human family, and of the elevating, purifying, and saving influences of their communion with Him. We may say that 'God with us' has always been the motto of His Church. When we go to the New Testament we find the same communion, only in a higher degree. In our Saviour, Jesus Christ—Immanuel, God with us—we see that glorious One, who held communion with Enoch, Abraham, and the Prophets, entering into an abiding and inconceivably close communion with His people, by assuming their nature, and taking up His abode with them and in them for ever. We feel we are breathing the very same atmosphere, when with Abraham at his tent door under the oaks of Mamre we listen reverently to the words of the wondrous visitor, and when on the shores of the Lake of Galilee we form a part of the crowd, who hang on the lips of Him who spake as never man spake. We have indeed come up higher, but we feel ourselves to be in the same mansion.

We are not however merely told of God's relationship to

those who love and serve Him. We are never allowed to forget that He is the Sovereign of the universe. All His intelligent creatures are bound to love and serve Him. He exercises over all His providential government, and bestows on all His providential gifts. For all the provision of His grace is intended, and all are commanded to partake of it.

The relation of God to the world.

• Great prominence is given throughout the Bible to the means, which God has in His wisdom and love employed, to remove the obstacles to man's communion with Himself. Obstacles existed on the part of both God and man. God's violated law and His insulted government demand our punishment, and our guilt and depravity combine to keep us away, and indeed to drive us away still farther from Him. The Bible is in a very special manner the record of God's work in the removal of these obstacles. At the very commencement we find, though necessarily in obscure terms, the promise of restoration. We read of the institution of sacrifice, and of man thus approaching his Maker. As we proceed we find new instructions given about sacrifice, new intimation of God being accessible only through the shedding of blood, and new prophecies of One, through whom reconciliation between God and man would be effected. The vast inferiority of the animal slain in sacrifice to him on whose behalf its blood was offered, and the frequency of animal sacrifices, might have taught the dullest mind, that of themselves they were insufficient to take away sin. As we advance we read of one who was to be taken as a lamb to the slaughter, and who was to bear and bear away men's iniquities. In the New Testament we are told in the most explicit terms of that one sacrifice, by which provision has been made for the removal of human guilt. 'God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' Throughout the Bible we are told of the blessings secured to all who believe on Him—pardon, restoration to God's favour, renewal by the Holy Spirit, conformity to God's image, obedience to His will, guidance, protection, eternal bliss. The New Testament only sets forth more clearly and fully what had been not obscurely intimated in the Old Testament.

The means employed to restore man.

In the account which the Bible gives of the relations in which God stands to man, there is one notable feature, which

God's sovereignty, and man's freedom, deserves special attention. God's sovereignty and man's freedom are constantly asserted. Commands, invitations, promises, threatenings and expostulations are addressed to men continually, and these surely imply that men are free responsible agents. Otherwise it would be mockery to speak to them in this manner. God's sovereignty is at the same time upheld. He is represented as having all men in His hands, and as having all events under His control. He is represented as hating sin, and the hater of sin cannot be the author of sin; and yet He makes the very wickedness of man to fulfil His purposes. Goodness in man is traced to His grace. How God's agency and man's can be reconciled, how we can be free agents while God is working within us and around us, we are not once told. If told, we should probably be unable to understand the explanation. We are conscious of freedom, for we commend ourselves when we do what is right, and blame ourselves when we do what is wrong. We act as motive prompts us. Yet God is sovereign. If He had not entire control over men and things we cannot conceive how His government of the world could be maintained. Each of these two great facts has its own evidence, and that ought to be enough for us. To stand still till the link of connexion be seen is to act a wicked and a foolish part. The entire absence from the Bible of all attempt by discussion to reconcile the facts would have been no feature of a merely human production. Only think of the angry prolonged discussions among those who have sincerely desired to make the Bible their standard, and the extreme statements on this subject made by parties on both sides, to be satisfied that there is something far higher here than human restraint.

Man's relation to man. While the Bible dwells on the relations in which God and man stand to each other, every attentive reader knows it gives a prominent place to the relations in which man stands to man, and to the duties devolving on us in consequence of these relations. In a previous Essay we observed that our Lord and His Apostles invariably look on men as united by social ties, and as called on to discharge social duties. There is not a word of direction for those who break away from society, and betake themselves to the desert. Similar is the aspect in which human

life is represented in the Old Testament. There also human beings are regarded as husbands and wives, parents and children, relatives and friends, fellow-countrymen and strangers, rulers and subjects, masters and servants, rich and poor. The Nazarene, though specially devoted to God, continued a member of society. The social virtues which ought to be exercised by those who stand to each other in these varied relations are earnestly inculcated, and the neglect of these virtues is severely censured. Men are commanded to love each other, and in every way in their power to promote each other's good. Oppression unkindness and wrong in every form are denounced in the strongest terms. No attendance at the Temple, no observance of festivals, no practice of rites, no gift to Priests is deemed any satisfaction for the neglect of social duty. No dignity of position, no height of knowledge can screen the wrong doer from censure and punishment. What intelligent reader of the law of Moses and the writings of the Prophets can doubt the lofty, just, and kindly tone which the Bible breathes? In its morality is inseparably bound up with religion—rather is an essential part of it. Among the reasons stated for the fearful calamities which befel the chosen people, oppression and unkindness are put side by side with idolatry and open apostacy. 'Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.' 'Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth.' * * 'Therefore my people are gone into captivity.' 'Thus saith the Lord, Ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother, and every one to his neighbour: behold I proclaim a liberty for you to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.' 'He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?' We may appropriately close these quotations from the Old Testament with a passage from the N. T. 'Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless

and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.'

Personal purity. Along with the discharge of social duty the maintenance of personal purity is always enjoined, and here too, no observance of rites, no liberal gifts, no toilsome services are accepted as satisfaction for the evil done. In every possible case reparation must be made to the injured party, and in every case there must be the immediate and entire abandonment of evil. Otherwise the offender cannot be pardoned and accepted. He may do what he likes in the way of ceremony, gift, or service, and the curse of God will rest on him.

These considerations show that while there is great diversity in the Bible there is also a marked unity, as throughout it gives the same essential view of God's character and government, of His relations to men, of His dealings towards them, of their duties to Him, and their duties to each other.

We proceed to observe that there is organic growth as well as organic unity.

Progress in the Bible Progress is the law of God's government in all departments known to us. Nothing is produced at once in its full maturity. According to the first chapter of Genesis the world was gradually made. The child grows up into the man, the humble pupil, learning the elements of knowledge, grows into the accomplished scholar. Thus it is in the vegetable and animal worlds. The Bible is no exception to the rule. We find every successive portion throwing light on what had preceded, and bringing forth its lessons into stronger relief. Moses built on primitive revelation. The Prophets, while basing their instructions on the Law, set forth its spirituality, and applied it to the various departments of life as had not been done before. They delight to dwell on the moral excellencies of God, on the heart service He requires, and on the utter inadequacy of mere outward ceremonies, even when Divinely prescribed. Some of the later Prophets give special prominence to the Priestly office, but so far are they from abandoning the foundation on which their predecessors built, that we hear the latest of all saying in God's name, 'Remember ye the law of Moses, my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.'

The New Testament is remarkable for the clearness and fullness of its teaching. In it we find nothing, which did not exist in germ in the Old Testament, but we find the maturity which was rightly reserved for the fulness of the times. Jesus the promised Messiah, to whom all the prophets witnessed, is set before us in the Glory of His person, and the blessings of His reign. The varied prophecies regarding Him, which contain such diversified and at first sight opposite particulars, are seen to meet in Him in harmonious combination. The things which had been allowed to God's ancient people on account of their hardness of heart and peculiar circumstances are now forbidden. The Church is put on a higher level, while its identity is maintained.

Maturity
of the
New Tes-
tament.

There is one point to which we have not yet alluded, which furnishes a striking illustration of the progressive and yet harmonious teaching found in the Bible. We refer to the revelation given of a future state. The earliest portion of Scripture seems to say nothing, or next to nothing, regarding man's state after leaving this world. We read that Enoch was not, because God took him, but whither He took him we are not told. We read of men sleeping with their fathers, but not a word is said of the nature of the sleep, or of an awakening from it. God declares Himself to be the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, but what He is to do for them as their God is nowhere mentioned. In the book of Job indeed there are intimations of a future state, but they are the bright flashes of lightning in a dark night rather than the shining of the day.

Illustra-
tion—Re-
velation of
the future
state.

This silence of the early books of Scripture has occasioned no small surprise, and has led not a few to hold that in the days of Moses a future state was unknown. On this subject the early Hebrew Scriptures appear far behind other books of remote antiquity, in which we are treated to satiety with stories of supernatural beings, and of worlds beyond the present. The apparent disadvantage is a great advantage. If we hear nothing of another state, we hear much of Him who is the Lord of the universe. Our attention is fixed on the relation in which He stands to human beings, on the close union into which He enters with them, and on the training He gives them that they may be fitted for His communion and service.

The binding of intelligent beings by indissoluble bonds to God and His throne is that which constitutes the purity and the joy of heaven. The supreme importance of this union was taught in the first instance to the Israelites, and thus they were prepared for the intimations of a future state, which the Psalms and the Prophetical writings contain. In them the blessedness of the future state is constantly represented as bound up with likeness to God, communion with Him, and the enjoyment of His favour. 'As for me I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.' 'In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for ever more.' 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee: My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.'

In the New Testament the doctrine of the future state comes out with the brightness of the noon-day sun. 'Our Saviour Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel.' Here however, though there be a great advance on preceding revelations, there is no departure from its leading principle. Here too it is union with God, which constitutes future blessedness, and separation from Him, which constitutes future misery. We do not read of believers going to heaven, but we read of their going to be with Jesus, of their sleeping in Jesus, of Jesus coming and taking them to Himself, of their being for ever with the Lord. Still it is the very union of which God spoke, when He said, 'I am the God of Abraham,' only under vastly more favourable conditions than Abraham could understand. When this is perceived we see how irrefragable our Lord's argument against the error of the Sadducees is. God is not the God of the dead but of the living. The Patriarchs had long been dead, and yet God declares Himself to be their God. Their spirits lived before Him and with Him, and would never be separated from Him. Not only so, but as the body was an essential part of their nature in this world, He will raise up their body, and make it a fit habitation for the glorified spirit.

We thus see regarding the great subject of a future state, which comes so closely home to man's heart, that there is an

entire harmony between the earliest and the latest portions of the Scriptures, and also vast progress, so that there is a difference as great as between the light of the moon and of the sun. The comparative silence of the earliest portion, viewed in connexion with the instruction which underlies it, was vastly more favourable to the enlightenment, elevation, and purification of the human spirit, than the Iliad, the Odyssey, the Theogony of Hesiod, and the Mahabharut, with their manifold details.

Here we may pause, that we may contemplate the main reason why the Bible, composed over such a wide interval of time, prepared by such a variety of authors, and addressed in the first instance to a small peculiar nation, has taken an extraordinary hold of the human mind. Only a sickly and precarious existence could have been expected for a book so composed, in any foreign country to which it might make its way. Far otherwise has been the result. The facts we have endeavoured to state need only to be pondered to explain a result so different from what might have been at first sight anticipated.

The adaptation of the Bible to man's nature and state.

In man there are two opposite tendencies, and just in so far as the one or the other prevails, men are repelled from the Bible or attracted towards it. So far as men give themselves up to vice and wickedness, so far as they give themselves up to ungodliness, even when abhorring vice, and practising the social virtues, the Bible cannot but be regarded as their enemy, or at the best an ungenial and unpleasant acquaintance, whose society is to be as much as possible shunned. While averse to God's character and claims, or habitually breaking His law, how can men but dislike a book, which asserts His claims to supreme love and unreserved obedience, which declares that to Him we owe all the good we possess, which teaches that He is ever near us, ever seeing us, ever trying us, ready to admit us to His favour and fellowship, and also ready in the event of disobedience to punish us? God's sovereignty and even His loving kindness cannot but be hateful to those, whose hearts are full of aversion to Him, and the Book, which unceasingly dwells on these themes, must be the object of intense dislike. We need not wonder that it is decried, and every effort put forth to strip it of authority.

Man's ungodliness does not however represent his proper

nature. It is the depravation, the perversion of that nature. Man was made for God, and in God alone can He rest. The cry comes up from the bottom of man's heart, 'Show me the Father, and it sufficeth me.' The Bible is God's answer to that cry, as we have endeavoured to show. It points as to Jesus Christ, seeing whom we see the Father, and tells us how trusting in Him our present and eternal well-being will be secured. It is thoroughly adapted to our highest nature, and while man retains his nature it will retain its power. It not only comes with a reassuring message to those, who know that their better nature has been trampled in the dust, and who are conscious of guilt, sorrow, and helplessness, but it tends to rouse men to a perception of that which constitutes their true dignity, and to wake them to a sense of those wants, which must be supplied, if either excellence or happiness be attained.

While the adaptation of the Bible to man's nature and position is the main element of its power, it has other charms for human hearts, which we shall state as concisely as we can.

The form
of the Bi-
ble.

The *form* of the Bible is an attractive quality. It might at first sight be deemed a radical defect. The book is very fragmentary. It gives as it were snatches of history, of biography, of song, and then a large part of it is taken up with the history of a small strange isolated nation. A book for mankind, it might have been supposed, would have been drawn up with scientific precision, firmly laying down principles, supporting them with reasons, furnishing sufficient illustration to make them plain, shunning as much as possible local and national allusions, and directly speaking to the whole human race,—all too being arranged in logical order, and set forth in unexceptionable style. Such a book to the scientific might be superior to the Bible, but as a book for the race, how immeasurably inferior! As it is, it has something adapted to all classes and all minds. In its wide sweep and mingled modes of instruction it has the freedom and the freshness of nature, in which the most varied objects often lie near each other in the most beautiful and attractive disorder.

Its aspect
towards
mankind.

The *aspect* of the Bible *towards mankind* is one great element of power. Notwithstanding the very prominent place given in it to one nation it contains proof throughout, that it was intended

for the whole of the human family. The proof lies on the face of the record, and recommends the book to man as man. For instance, the unity of the race is clearly affirmed. "God hath made of one blood all the nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." They are widely separated from each other, they speak different languages, follow different customs, practise different rites, and are often full of hatred and dislike to each other, and yet, according to the Bible, they form one great family, requiring only the cement of love to God and love to each other to give them the consciousness of the closest brotherhood. Thus we are taught in Genesis, and thus we are taught on to the end of Revelation.

We are never permitted to forget this unity of the race, and God's common relation to all, as we read of His peculiar dealings towards the people of Israel. The covenant made by God with Abraham was, we may say, the Magna Charta of the people of Israel. In it the good of all nations was declared to be a main reason why Abraham's descendants were to be for a season separated from others. 'In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.' The Israelites were commanded to have no intermarriages or friendship with idolatrous nations, but separation was as necessary for the good of the nations as of the Israelites, for otherwise the moral force would be lost, without the exercise of which the nations would remain degraded and debased. The idolatry of the nations was condemned, their sins were denounced, in the case of the Canaanites, whose wickedness had been most daring and determined, a decree of destruction was sent forth, but to the heathen, as members of the human family, the kindest feeling was breathed. The stranger who should come into the land of Israel was to be treated with all the consideration, which it became those to exercise, who had been strangers in the land of Egypt, and who knew the heart of strangers. In the Psalms and the writings of the Prophets how much is there about Gentile nations! How many are the prophecies of their return to the living God! With what delight are their restoration and salvation anticipated! The very nations that had shown bitter enmity to Israel, the Egyptians and the Assyrians, are represented as brought into the Church, and as enjoying God's fatherly love

and care. We have instances of lofty piety and true excellence among those who did not belong to the chosen race, such as Melchisedek, Jethro, Rahab, Job, and others.

When we hear our Saviour give the command, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature,' and when we see the Apostles, in obedience to the command going forth, and gathering the Gentiles into the fold of Christ, we do not feel there is any jar between their course, and the teaching of the Old Testament. We rather feel we are seeing that, without which the lessons of preceding dispensations would have remained unapplied. The Jews were narrow minded, but the Jewish dispensation had the most catholic aims and tendencies. Its apparent narrowness was only the covering required to preserve it for the ultimate universal prevalence of its principles. This habitual aspect of kindly interest in mankind shown in the Bible is well fitted to tell on persons of every nation.

The Bible
a popular
book,

The Bible is a *popular* book in the best sense of that expression. The Old Testament was written at first in the language spoken by the people. It was put into the hands of all classes, not of any one class, priestly or learned. All classes were commanded to study it, and to make it the standard of character and conduct. No peculiar claim over it was given to the Priests of old, though they were under peculiar obligations to make themselves acquainted with its meaning, and to imbibe its spirit, that they might be fitted to instruct and lead their brethren. The Apostle Paul says that to the Jews, he does not say to the Priests, "were committed the oracles of God." The New Testament was written in the language most widely used by the Christians of that age. With a few exceptions it is addressed to communities, and the few letters addressed to individuals are laid before all. It is supposed that all are capable of understanding it, and following its instructions. The whole Bible is thus a popular book, written in the languages ordinarily used and addressed to all classes without distinction. It is thus fitted to make its way among corresponding classes in all nations.

Its impar-
tiality.

The uniform *impartiality* of the Bible is remarkable. The Israelites were not flattered, because they were God's chosen people. There is much in the Bible to make them humble

and thankful, but nothing to make them proud. They are told they were separated from others, not for their own righteousness or goodness, but on account of God's sovereign kindness to them. Disobedience on their part was peculiarly heinous, and therefore the cup of God's wrath, which the nations were required to drink, was to be put first, according to Jeremiah, into the hands of Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, the kings and the princes thereof. Their historians and poets, glowing as they write with patriotic feeling, and ready to make any sacrifice for their nation, unsparingly denounce their faults—at a period too, long before our enlightened age, when many able writers profess to have risen entirely above mere national feeling, and rather enjoy the exposure of littleness and wrong in their own countrymen.

This impartiality of the sacred writers extends to the account given of the most distinguished members of the nation, to whom from generation to generation they looked up with reverence. Every reader knows how faithfully the faults and sins of Abraham, of Jacob, of Moses, of David, of Hezekiah, and others in the Old Testament, and of Peter, John, James, the Apostles of our Lord, and the converts in the New Testament, are exhibited to our view. We sometimes see the darkest stains on the brightest characters, that we may be taught how weak and erring men are at their best. This impartiality extends to all classes. There is no flattery of the rich, there is no condescension to win the applause of the poor. The Priests are often censured, and their sins are declared to be peculiarly heinous on account of their peculiar position. We must always remember that these censures were uttered not by men of revolutionary tendencies, but by men warmly attached to the constitution of their country, and bent on upholding it. However partial man may be in his own case, impartiality is a quality which commands universal respect, and the impartiality of the Bible has done much to commend it to human hearts.

In connexion with this impartiality we may mention the peculiar aspect of *kindliness*, which the Bible has towards the widow, the orphan, the slave, the tempted, the sorrowful, the afflicted of every class. The world has ever been full of weary, sorrowful, and down-trodden ones, and the Bible speaks to

The kind-
liness of
the Bible.

them all in tones of sympathy, love, and helpfulness. The children of woe and wrong have followed after many things for relief, and have found them illusive, like the mirage of the desert, but when they have come to the Bible, and listened to its voice, they have discovered a well of living water. Can it be doubted that this uniform kindness of the Bible to the sorrowful and the helpless is one great element of its power?

The realism of the Bible.

The *realism* of the Bible, if we may use such an expression, is a very attractive feature. Facts of so palpable a kind, that the mind can easily comprehend them, and of so interesting a kind that the mind is most readily impressed by them, are constantly set forth in the Scriptures. By them great principles are illustrated, and the most weighty lessons are conveyed. These facts are drawn from the fields of nature, of man, and of providence.

Has antiquity brought down to us any book, or any collection of books, so abounding with references to natural objects as the Bible is? If so, we are ignorant of the fact. How much do we read in the Bible of beasts, birds, and fishes—of mountains, vallies, forests, trees, food-producing plants, flowers, fountains, rivers, storms, rain? The mere enumeration of these objects would demand pages. In what striking terms are the sun, the moon, the stars, the host of heaven described! In many passages these are named as manifestations of God's power, wisdom and goodness—as made and upheld by Him, and yet entirely distinct from Him. In other passages they are used as illustrations of spiritual truths and objects. These natural descriptions are fraught with instruction conveyed in the most pleasing and instructive form.

It is however in the departments of man and Providence that the realism of the Bible specially appears. It is true to a proverb that example is more powerful than precept. From the nature which God has given us we are open to powerful influences from our fellow-creatures, and the more intensely human these lives are, the deeper is the impression they make upon us. The Bible is singularly adapted to this peculiarity of our minds. It is emphatically a book of facts illustrative of human nature in all its phases. We see to what a height of excellence, usefulness, and honour, men may rise in spite of

the most unfavourable circumstances, and the most formidable obstacles, when they are animated by love, faith, and hope, and how low they may sink, how miserable they may become, and how much injury they may inflict, when, notwithstanding great advantages, they give themselves up to the sway of sordid impulses. A large part of the Bible is occupied with narrative, and even those portions which have not narrative continually appeal to facts, eminently fitted to give us an insight into man's inmost soul, to show us the springs of action, to teach us the duty and blessedness of entire consecration to God, and the sin and ruin of rebellion against Him. To say nothing of the greatest life ever lived on earth, may we not say that such lives as those of Joseph, Moses, David, Elijah, Elisha, and Paul, have thrilled the hearts of human beings, and will continue to thrill them to the end of time? These are lives which men will not allow to die, and human hearts will guard that book, in which these lives are enshrined. The beacons as well as the examples of the Bible will be remembered. Cain, Pharaoh, Saul, Ahab, Manasseh and Judas Iscariot have awed and will continue to awe human beings from the brink of the abyss. Can we be surprised that a book, so pervaded by reality, and presenting such examples and beacons, should have held on its way from country to country, from age to age?

In close connexion with this feature of the Bible we may mention its proverbs and parables, chiefly based on well known facts in human life. The Old Testament and the New abound with instances. Who does not know that the Great Teacher largely used this mode of instruction? Was there ever a parable, which went more directly to the heart of humanity than that of the Prodigal Son?

The *practical* character of the Bible is very noticeable. There is nothing in it to gratify mere curiosity. There is no answer to idle questions. There is no attempt to impart mere amusement or pleasure. It shuns the technical, the abstruse, and the abstract. The tendency of every part is to mould man's character and direct his life. Every where we find ourselves in the presence of the living and true God, whom we are taught to love, trust, and serve, and who graciously unites love to

Its practical character.

Himself with love to our fellow-creatures. Every where we are impelled towards the pursuit and the practice of moral excellence. The deepest truths in the Bible are set before us with this practical aim. For instance, the doctrine of the mysterious distinction in the Godhead, which we call the Trinity, is not once set forth in a speculative form. We are taught it in connexion with our salvation, so that we may love the Father, who gave His Son for us, that we may love the Son, who gave Himself for us, and that we may love the Holy Spirit, who applies to our hearts the blessings of Christ's mediation. The doctrinal teaching of the Bible has throughout a most practical bent, and entirely separates it from those books, in which dogma appears as a mere matter of reason and thought, divorced from the conscience and the life.

The holiness of the Bible.

The *holiness* of the Bible repels many from it, but it draws others to it. However much man may love sin, he cannot find rest in its practice. He cannot but respect the right, even when he follows the wrong, and he knows he is befooled, when led to do that which he loves and yet condemns. There is something within him, which stands up for goodness, and craves for it. The Bible confirms that testimony of the conscience, and meets that craving. The very fact that it never palter with evil, and urges to the pursuit of moral excellence, gives the Bible a power, which it must retain, so long as man retains a moral nature.

Its insight into the human heart.

The *insight* of the Bible, into the human heart, discovering deep secrets, which had hitherto been concealed, and accounting for much which had been inexplicable, has led many a one to exclaim 'God is here of a truth. Only He who knows all things could have known me, and revealed me to myself.' Along with this we find in the Bible the utterance to God of man's most intense and profound feelings, as in the book of Psalms, and other parts of the Sacred volume.

Its silence.

The *silence* of the Bible on many points is a great recommendation. He who knew the secrets of the human heart, and could lay them bare, surely knew the secrets of nature, and yet these are not divulged. The writers of the Bible have with one consent abstained from teaching philosophy and science. We have allusions to the opinions entertained, and

we have illustrations drawn from prevailing notions, but the writers persistently show that the teaching of science was beyond their province. This was a work, which men could do for themselves, and from the doing of which they would receive great benefit. Hence the Bible has come down to us untrammelled by systems of philosophy and science, most of which have given way to the systems of succeeding ages. We see the highest wisdom in the silence thus maintained in a book intended for all classes and all periods.

We mention only one other feature the Bible has—and that is *authority*. There is no hesitation in its tone. There is no betrayal of doubt. There is no mere expression of opinion, in favour of which much may be advanced. Throughout, the writers maintain the bearing of those, who speak what they know, and testify what they have seen. Often the words are used ‘Thus saith the Lord,’ and when the words are not used, their spirit is implied. Many who love the Bible and yet can argue little for it, feel that it speaks to them with an authority, which assures them of its Divine origin, and leads them to say ‘Speak, Lord, for thy servants hear.’

It is time for us to review the facts we have stated, and to draw from them the inferences they suggest.

We have seen that notwithstanding the diversity of the Bible, it has a marked unity. How is this to be accounted for? Has it been ever known that a series of writers, belonging to one nation, have from age to age pursued the same design, and while retaining their respective individuality, have taught essentially the same thing, so that at last their works have been put together, and read as one book, without any sense of incongruity? As the writers of the Bible from the very nature of the case could have agreed on no such plan, may we not justly infer they have been directed by Him, who is over all, and who is unaffected by the changes of time?

This inference is greatly strengthened when we consider wherein the unity consists. The unity consists in giving the same views, in a progressive form, regarding God, His character, His relation to man, man’s relation to Him, the aim of man’s life, the course he should pursue, the course he should avoid, and the future to which he should look forward. These

are the subjects, which affect us most, as rational and moral creatures, and which we might expect a revelation to treat, in the event of a revelation being vouchsafed. The Bible treats these subjects in such a manner that the writers of successive periods base what they say on the teachings of their predecessors, and the last and brightest portion is so interpenetrated with what had gone before, that we cannot separate them, without doing violence to the whole. There is a difference, not the difference of contrariety, but of organic growth—the difference between the plant and the tree, between the boy and the man.

We not infrequently find a close connexion between the successive writings of a nation, but the connexion is not that of either unity or progress. The minds of successive writers have been stimulated by the literature of their people, but they have taken very different paths, and have arrived at discordant conclusions. For the unity and growth shown in the Sacred Scriptures we look in vain to the writings of heathen nations. The later writings of the Greeks and Romans do not profess to be an unfolding and fulfilling of their ancient writings. No one will maintain that the Purans of the Hindoos stand to the Veds in the same relation as the New Testament does to the Old. For the cause of the difference we are surely justified in looking higher than to a human authorship.

The strength of the inference for the Divine origin and authority of the Bible, founded on its unity and growth, is seen when we look at the views of God and man, which it unfolds. How worthy of God are these views! How adapted are they to man! How fitted at once to elevate and to humble him! How far are these views from the abstractions of philosophy, and the vagaries of superstition! Here we find no transcendental notions of the Divine essence, so subtle that the mind cannot apprehend them, so cold and distant that the heart cannot cling to them. Here we find no Gods and Goddesses, possessed of superhuman power, and leading, if we may use such an expression, infra-human lives. Here we find no wild grotesque stories, inculcating no truth, and violating probability and common sense. Here we find no deification of natural objects. Here we find not a trace of Pantheism, which has been so attractive to both cultivated and uncultivated minds, and has much

to recommend it, if we suppress our moral nature, give up the essential distinction between right and wrong, and part with personal responsibility. Instead of such views we ever find one great and glorious Being, perfect in excellence, clothed with majesty, showering down His gifts on all His creatures, infinitely above us, yet closely related to us, justly offended with us, yet making wondrous provision for our restoration to His favour and image, maintaining our personality, while admitting us to closest communion with Himself, guarding and sustaining through life all who trust in Him, and preparing them for a glorious hereafter. We find religion and morality bound together by the closest ties. Rather morality is taught in the Bible as religion in one main department of its actings. We find a life prescribed, which needs only to be led, to ennoble the poorest and humblest of our race.

It may be most confidently maintained that such views of God and man as the Bible maintains throughout are not to be found in any books, which man has produced. Religious questions have had irresistible attractions for human beings. We have been told of nations so low, that no worship of any kind has been found among them, but further research has proved this statement to be incorrect. Even among these, notions about supernatural beings have been held, and rites have been performed to secure their good-will. We cannot enter into particulars about the views held, and the rites practised, by the nations noted for their mental activity. All we can say is that they have been ruled by Naturalism, Polytheism, and Pantheism, sometimes in turn, and often in combination. Foolish and hurtful rites have been practised, and wild soul-polluting legends have been promulgated. Morality has been divorced from religion. Even when the doctrine of One God has been avowed, it has often been held in a Pantheistic sense, which overthrows human responsibility and effaces the notion of sin, because God Himself is regarded as the only Doer. Polytheism and Pantheism—the doctrine of many Gods, and the doctrine of the universe being God in action, He alone having real existence—do not at first sight appear to have any affinity to each other, but in fact they have been closely combined. They were so among the Greeks. They are so among the Hindoos now.

The writings of heathen nations do not profess to be adapted for universal use. As a rule they have been written in the language of the learned, and they are utterly wanting in those elements of the Bible, which we have mentioned, as explaining its singular power over nations in every part of the globe, in the most different stages of civilization. Would not the man be considered mad, who would propose to translate the Zendavesta of the old Persians, and the Veds and Purans of the Hindoos, into the various languages of the earth, and to bring out cheap editions of them, that people of every class and clime might be instructed and cheered by them? If they have such adaptation for general use, as the Bible has, why should not the attempt be made by their admirers? They have no such adaptation, and therefore the proposal would be preposterous.

The decisive question.

We now come to the decisive question, why is it thus? Why are the Jewish and Christian Scriptures so different from, and so immeasurably superior to, the so-called Sacred Writings of other nations? Do you call in question the superiority? If you see nothing in the Theism of the Bible, in the absolutely wise and good sovereignty of the infinitely wise and holy One, superior to the Naturalism, the Polytheism, and the Pantheism of the nations, if you see nothing in the course of life prescribed in the Bible superior to the course laid out by heathenism, we can only sorrowfully say that, however much your intellect has been trained, you have much need to attend to your spiritual culture.

You may deny the superiority, but you cannot deny the difference, for it is so palpable that every person who will look at it must see it, however little he may be impressed by it. If you pronounce the Scriptures merely human, you are bound to show how it is that no other nation has produced writings, which can with any show of fairness be for a moment classed along with them. Do you say that the peculiarity of the Shemitic race has been attachment to monotheism, and the culture of their moral nature? What say you then to the fact that such Shemitic nations as the Moabites, Edomites, Syrians, Arabians, and Chaldeans gave themselves up to gross idolatry, and were as morally debased as the other races of mankind? What say you to the fact that the Jews themselves so grie-

vously failed to maintain a high moral standard, and were for ages prone to idolatry? How can you explain the production of writings, which while specially prepared for them have proved themselves to be so adapted to man as man, that they have become the prized heritage of multitudes in every nation? If any other nation be capable of producing such writings, why has it not produced them?

There is only one explanation which meets the case. Notwithstanding the glimmer of light from above, which the writers of other nations had, they were mainly left to the workings of their own minds, and we see the result in their contradictory views, their grievous errors, and the dark uncertainty in which their speculations ended, while the writers of the Bible were taught from above, and were so directed by God, that we hear in it His voice, imparting the very instruction we need, in order to our well-being in this world and the next.

The one explanation, which meets the case,

We have throughout this Essay been considering the testimony, which the Bible gives to itself, by the excellence and consistency of its teaching. Corroborative proofs of its Divine origin and authority come from many quarters. We merely name some of them.

Corroborative proofs,

The constitution and history of the nation of Israel are so peculiar, that the supernatural facts recorded in the Bible can alone account for them. Receive these facts and all is plain. Reject these facts, and all is incomprehensible.

Each part of the Bible rests on what has gone before, and we are thus led back to the earliest portion. We find an illustration in the history of our own country, in which step by step we go back to our commencement as a separate people. Every successive stage supposes the chief events of the preceding period, and cannot be otherwise understood.

The details regarding the land of Judæa with which the Bible abounds, fit into our present information regarding it, as a key fits into a lock.

The better acquainted we become with the history of the nations, with whom the Jews came into contact, the more are we impressed with the historical accuracy of the Bible. The supernatural and the natural facts of the Bible are so in-

separably blended, that every thing which tends to confirm the latter strengthens our faith in the former.

The writers of the Bible do not report hear-say, but relate facts, of which they were assured, for many of which they had the evidence of their senses. They maintain the tone of rectitude and truth, and condemn falsehood in every form. Can we suppose such persons were deceivers?

The prophecies of the Bible, in connexion with their fulfilment, furnish a strong argument for its Divine origin.

The miracles of the Bible in their occasion, nature, object, and evidence, form, as we take them together, a striking contrast to the wonders with which the so-called Sacred Writings of the nations abound.

We have in the Bible, a priesthood (as in the Old Testament) but no priestcraft, unworldliness, but no asceticism, rites, but no magical efficacy attached to them, as if, of themselves, they could effect anything. Every person knows, or may know, how opposite is the case with human religions.

So far were Jews and Christians of themselves capable of producing the Bible, that they have been unable to keep themselves on the level, to which it had raised them. When we leave it for their writings we often feel that we have descended from heaven to earth.

Difficul-
ties, and
sugge-
stions in
reply.

If any one ask 'Are there then no difficulties in the Bible? Are you ready with an answer to every objection, which has been advanced?' we reply, 'There are difficulties, and no one can solve them all.' It would be strange indeed, if there were no difficulties. These are by no means confined to it. They are around us every day in the government of the world, and the strongest minds are unable to remove them. If the difficulties of the Bible were vastly greater than they are, the proofs of its Divine origin we have mentioned would remain to demand our belief. They furnish us with the positive evidence on which our faith rests. Many to their own deep injury allow their minds to fasten on the difficulties of the Bible, and refuse to give a careful candid hearing to what is advanced for their solution, while the many proofs presented of its Divine origin are utterly neglected by them.

We can only indicate in a few sentences the line of thought,

which might be pursued in reference to the main objections advanced.

Providence has in a remarkable manner watched over the Bible, so that we may be more assured of the substantial accuracy of the text than of any ancient book, but no miracle has been wrought to secure perfect accuracy, and transcribers have no doubt committed mistakes, especially in reference to numbers.

As we have already observed, the Bible has not a scientific form, and if we try to interpret it, as if it had scientific precision, we create difficulties, where none exist.

It ought ever to be remembered that the dark problems of the world, of which the first and the chief is the entrance of sin, have not been caused by the Bible. They would have pressed themselves on us, had the Bible never existed. In it we do not find them solved, but we find much to relieve the gloom, and to make us hope for clearer light. We have enough told us to give the assurance that we are ruled in wisdom and love. If the Bible account of the entrance of sin into the world, and of the evils it has wrought, suggest questions we cannot answer, what shall we say to the notion that there has been no fall, that man, as he emerged from the brute, was a howling savage, and that in fact he is vastly better now than he was at first? On this supposition we cannot see how there can be any reverence for God as holy, righteous, and wise, or how we can maintain He is not the author of sin, if there be such a thing as sin.

The Bible goes back to very ancient times, and to a state of society very different from ours. There is so much of humanity in it, that we can well understand its main features, and yet there are things which from the nature of the case must remain strange to us.

The narratives of the Bible are necessarily brief,—otherwise what a huge volume would the Bible be!—and we need not wonder that we meet occasionally with perplexing statements. The difficulty would often be cleared up by knowing some fact, which the writer has not mentioned. The great truths and facts, which principally affect us, are set forth with unmistakable clearness.

The Sacred Writers often relate facts, without expressing

any opinion regarding them, leaving us to judge by the great principles they inculcate. Faithful statement is all which ought to be looked for in such cases.

The nation of Israel stood in so peculiar a relation to God that offences committed by them were visited by their rulers with punishment, which would not be suitable under the Christian dispensation. The Church was then in its non-age, and has now reached its man-hood. The Church in its successive stages has required, and has received different treatment.

Evils were for a time tolerated, which were gradually removed by the application of the principles, with which the Bible is charged.

As it pleased God to reveal Himself to mankind through the medium of a certain nation, and by the institution among them of certain ordinances, details are furnished which can be of comparatively little interest to Christians in our day, and yet they are valuable as giving that historical definiteness to the Book, which enables us the better to realize the course of God's dispensations. We refer to such details as the genealogies of the people of Israel, and the minute regulations of the Mosaic law.

In the writings of the Prophets transitions are sudden, and difficult to follow, but prolonged study will have its full reward.

Truth is presented in the Bible in its length and breadth, and therefore there is sometimes an apparent discrepancy, when there is a real agreement.

Some of the objections most persistently advanced against the Bible are founded on superficial difficulties, which would have never been found in books prepared by persons seeking to deceive.

After all, a thorough detestation of sin and a perception of its deserved punishment would do more than anything else to silence objections against the Bible.

Inspira-
tion.

We have advocated no special theory of inspiration. We read 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.' In many ways Scripture asserts this on its own behalf, and its contents prove the assertion to be true. Both the human and the Divine elements are most manifest, but how they were so combined that individuality was maintained, while the Divine pur-

pose was secured, we cannot say. If in the ordinary operations of God's Spirit, man's individuality is never overborne, while he is being renewed, we need have no difficulty in accepting the fact, that the personality of the Sacred Writers was maintained while under His extraordinary influence. *How* this can be is inexplicable in either case, and does not concern us.

Is the Bible the book we have represented it to be? Is it stamped with the seal of an All-wise, All-righteous, and All-loving God? Is it so adapted to man, and so fitted to draw him at once to goodness and to happiness? What shall we say then to the treatment it has often received? What shall we say to the utter neglect to which it is doomed by multitudes, who have it by them, and who profess to believe in it as the Word of God? What shall we say to its being deemed by so many the most uninteresting and even forbidding of books? What shall we say to the fierce assaults made upon it, as if mankind would be delivered from grievous bondage, if it could only be discredited and driven from the earth? What can we say to it, but that next to the treatment our Saviour Jesus Christ Himself received when on earth, the treatment which the Bible has received bears sad testimony to the character of man? Yet the Bible lives. It is enshrined in millions of hearts, and from them it can never be torn. Many would feel its extinction more than the Israelites of old would have felt the withdrawal of the pillar of cloud and fire, which led them through the wilderness. It holds on its way in the world, and at the same time above the world, and in advance of the world. It is continually beckoning men on to a higher life. Terrible are the evils by which the world continues to be afflicted, but in the Bible is the panacea for them all. It wars with lust, with unrighteousness, with selfishness in every form, and will never give up the contest, till purity, righteousness, and love everywhere prevail. When rightly interpreted and truly applied, it secures both social and moral progress, and constantly points forward to still higher attainment. In it there is hope for the enslaved, the oppressed, the down-trodden of every class. In it there is comfort for the sorrowful, rest for the weary, strength for the weak, and good cheer for the anxious and the fearful. Notwithstanding the treatment it has received,

The treatment the Bible has received, and its future triumph.

it has conferred on the world innumerable benefits, and so far is its beneficent career from being ended, that we are assured its present is to its future as a few drops before a copious rain, as the early dawn before the full day. Many are its excellencies, but its choicest excellence is its testimony to the Saviour of the world. It will continue to bless mankind, because it will continue to testify of Him, who is the life and the light of men, who is 'As an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest;—as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land !'



“Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.”—HOSEA, XIV, 9.

“This also we humbly and earnestly beg: that human things may not prejudice such as are divine; neither that from the unlocking of the gates of sense, and the kindling of a greater natural light, any thing may arise of incredulity or intellectual night towards divine mysteries; but rather that by our minds, thoroughly purged and cleansed from fancy and vanity, and yet subject and perfectly given up to the divine oracles, there may be given unto faith the things that are faith’s.”—LORD BACON.

THE CONTROVERSIES
OF THE DAY
IN THEIR BEARING ON CHRISTIANITY;
AND THE
Genesis of Unbelief.

“He that is first in his own cause seemeth just, but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.” Many a plausible plea, which has seemed unassailable, has on close examination been proved utterly worthless. When a cause is bad, an impartial and thorough investigation is its ruin. When a cause is good, nothing can do it more service than an unflinching scrutiny. It may at first come under suspicion, and timid friends may fear for its stability, but if its advocate only see wherein its strength lies, and be competent to assert its claims, the result will be its securing wider recognition, and higher honours, than it could have otherwise obtained. Truth has every reason to court the day. Falsehood has every reason to dread it. “The lip of truth shall be established for ever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment.”

Truth
courts
inquiry.

In our former Essays we were not forgetful of the warfare waged against the views we were propounding. We once and again intimated the hostility, which these views, we believe most unjustly and unhappily, have to encounter. We did not however dwell on the objections advanced. We endeavoured to show from the Sacred Scriptures themselves, as they lie before us, that they have characteristics, which separate them not only in degree but in kind from all other productions, and that these characteristics can be accounted for, only on the supposition of a Divine origin. We put special emphasis on the character of

Object of
former
Essays.

the Lord Jesus Christ, described in the Gospels, as utterly inexplicable, except on the supposition of His being the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world. We asserted the scientific principle, that the theory ought to be accepted, which looks at all the facts of the case, and accounts for them all, while the theory ought to be rejected, which overlooks some of the facts, misrepresents others, and gives no adequate account of the rest. We maintained that acting on this principle we are bound to receive the Gospels as a truthful biography, and when they are so received, every thing must be necessarily accepted, for which we care to contend.

Our belief
is based
on posi-
tive rea-
sons.

How are we to be dislodged from the position we have taken? If it can be shown that our facts are misstatements, and our inferences illegitimate deductions—that the Scriptures have no such characteristics as we have ascribed to them, or that these characteristics can be explained on the supposition of the writings being merely human, our position is untenable. If on the other hand, there be no careful and candid consideration of the facts—if they be ignored, or misrepresented—if no view be advanced which can account for them, we are entitled to stand firmly on our conclusions. It will be of no avail to tell us, that something has been discovered in an entirely different department, which is incompatible with our conclusions. Here we have, what we affirm to be, positive reasons for our belief. Look the facts fully in the face, and tell us what they mean. If we have not interpreted them aright, give us the right interpretation. Show us the flaw in our argument. Till you do this, we feel we are on solid ground, and are under no temptation to leave it.

The dif-
ference
between
truth and
our con-
ceptions
of truth.

If however apparently strong and good reasons lead to conclusions, which clash with each other, what are we to do? Are we to believe as true contradictory statements? This is impossible. Truth cannot conflict with truth, while lies are in conflict with each other, as well as with truth. We require however to be continually reminded, that truth is many-sided, that it is a sphere, rather than a plane, that truths are often opposite though not opposed, and that the link of connexion between them is often beyond our power to discern. We ought to remember, that there is a great difference between truth and

our conceptions of truth. Our conceptions are often erroneous, and thus a contradiction is inferred, where none exists. When a contradiction is alleged, it is our duty to look afresh at the grounds of our belief, to re-examine our position, and to seek with candid and truthful minds for an explanation. If no explanation present itself, we ought to exercise patience, and to guard against impatience, which is the friend of falsehood, and the enemy of truth. We ought not to let go anything supported by evidence, which satisfies our mind, however unable we may be to show its accord with something else, for which also evidence is adduced. We may depend on our patience being in the end rewarded.

Let us, so far as we can, and so far as the limits of an Essay will permit, apply these views to the conflict between belief and unbelief, as carried on in our day. We are told that the two great antagonists of a supernatural revelation are Science and Biblical Criticism. To the alleged antagonism of science we would first pay attention.

The conflict between belief and unbelief.

We are told that science has come into conflict with religion, rather with theology, and as on one side there is exact knowledge, while the other side can only allege probabilities and prescription, no doubt can be entertained on which side the advantage lies. In the most varied forms, with all the emphasis which asseveration, reiteration, and full confidence can give, we are told that science has rendered the established beliefs of Christendom untenable by those who keep their eyes open, and are determined to follow truth, wherever it will lead them.

The boast of unbelief.

The first thought which suggests itself is, that revealed religion and science have such different spheres, pursue such different methods, and aim at such different ends, we might suppose collision to be impossible.

The different spheres of science and religion.

Revealed religion, as we find it in the Bible, has for its great aim our restoration to God. With this view it teaches us that we have fallen from our first estate, that we are guilty and depraved, that we cannot restore ourselves, and that God has in His great mercy made ample provision for our spiritual wants. Many are the things, which the Bible contains, but this is the main purport of its teaching, to which everything else is made subordinate.

The aim of religion.

The aim
of science.

Science, taking the term in the narrow sense in which it is ordinarily used in our day, occupies an entirely different sphere. Its function is not to tell man what he is as a moral being, and to teach him how God's favour is to be secured, and how excellence is to be attained. It has to do with the world outside of man, with its various objects, their phenomena, their laws, their connexion, and their uses. It lays down for itself certain laws of induction and deduction, which the mind has furnished and approved, and it conducts its inquiries under the guidance of these laws, fearlessly pursuing its investigations, in the assurance that these laws, faithfully obeyed, cannot lead to error.

It is thus evident the function of science is not to teach religion, and the function of the Bible is not to teach science. They can render mutual help only by keeping to their respective spheres.

The silence of
the Bible
on scientific
subjects

The silence of the Bible on strictly scientific subjects, to which we have already referred in the Essay on the Bible, deserves special attention. Some fifty writers have been engaged on the Bible. The roll extends over ages. These writers have differed widely from each other in temperament, in position, and in attainments, and yet, as if they had met together, and bound themselves by a mutual agreement, they have scrupulously abstained from teaching the scientific and philosophical notions of their respective periods, while they freely refer to natural objects, and use the language and illustrations of their times.

The obligation of
science to
religion.

Science then ought to feel its obligation to revealed religion for the open unobstructed path it presents for its investigations. Hindooism, Buddhism, and other human religions have given to science no such liberty. If science is to make its way among Hindoos and Budhists, it must be over the ruins of their religious systems. Christianity on the other hand by its steady prosecution of its high moral and spiritual ends, to the exclusion of work, which man can well accomplish for himself, gives to science the liberty essential to its life.

The obligation of science to revealed religion does not end with the liberty it obtains. There is not the mere absence of restraint. There is the imparting of a healthy stimulus. According to the Scriptures the world is God's, and every thing it

contains. He made it. He upholds it. He rules it. He administers the laws, which He himself ordained. On the world, in all its departments, He has stamped His power, wisdom, and goodness. Who can receive such teaching without being stirred up to contemplate God's works, and to investigate them, so far as opportunity is furnished? The spirit of the Bible speaks out in the words "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all." "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein." Natural objects are continually called on to praise their Maker. Is not religion thus a stimulus to science? To slight the varied objects of nature, the uses to which they may be turned, and the laws by which they are regulated, is to slight the Bible. We must acknowledge Christians have sometimes been chargeable with this error, but happily we have the Bible itself, and before the utterance of its voice false glosses disappear. When we rightly apprehend its lessons, we are prompted to the investigation of nature, because we are imbued with the feeling that we are going from one room to another in our Father's mansion, where at every step, by the treasures we behold, we are taught how great and good He is.

The obligation to gratitude is by no means entirely on the side of science. It is on the side of revealed religion as well. They are capable of rendering great help to each other. While the Bible, when received, brings us to God, and invests the world with new interest, because it is His, science by the wondrous facts it sets before us, and the wise arrangements it discovers, exalts our thoughts of God's power, greatness, and goodness, furnishes us with delightful subjects for contemplation, and binds us more closely to Him, who is the Lord of all, and who is also our Father and our God.

The obligation of religion to science.

Science and revealed religion are then natural allies, and those are not the true friends of either, who would set them at variance. They might as well engage the right hand and the left in a contest with each other. Such an unnatural contest does great discredit to those who cause it, whoever they may be. Those who believe in the Bible as the Word of God, and who also believe in the ascertained facts of science, being by belief in each case on appropriate independent evidences, are

Natural allies.

sured, there is no disagreement, though there be a misunderstanding, and confidently look forward to the time, when further information, and a truer reading of the facts, will draw forth from all honest hearts the acknowledgment of thorough harmony.

The mistakes of theology.

The history of the past is well fitted to inspire us with hope for the future. Again and again the cry has been raised that science and the religion of the Bible are antagonistic, and again and again it has been proved no antagonism exists. Here we must confess that theology, rather the prejudiced and mistaken theologian, has often been the first and great offender. He has many a time made the Bible responsible for views of God and nature, which it does not teach. Who does not know the alarm caused by Galileo's affirming that the earth went round the sun, not the sun round the earth? The theologian exclaimed the Bible was false, if this notion was true. Who does not now believe the alarm to have been unfounded? In the same way it was maintained that the firmament meant in Scripture a solid vault, and that the science was false, which taught otherwise, while in fact the word means expanse, and is perfectly accordant with modern scientific teaching. The Bible was supposed to teach there could not be antipodes, while it teaches nothing of the kind. When Geology announced that the crust of the earth had existed for vast periods, the alarm was again raised that Scripture was contradicted, but the alarm soon subsided, as it was shown that long before Geology was heard of, the opening words of Genesis, "In the beginning God made the heavens and the earth," had been interpreted as referring to an indefinite remote period. After the commission of these and similar mistakes it well becomes theology to tread warily, and to be sure of its ground, especially in matters of science, which the Bible from its very structure can refer to only in the most general and popular way.

The mistakes of science.

Has science committed no mistakes? While theology ought to walk warily may science go forward with unhesitating step and lofty mien? Those who say that it becomes science thus to demean itself, must be either very ignorant or very prejudiced. It is sometimes said that the teachings of science are secured for all time, that they rest on the sure basis of fact, and

cannot be overthrown. Science is spoken of, as if its observations and calculations had been invariably correct, and its inferences always legitimate. Such a supposition, even in reference to what have been called the facts of science, is utterly unfounded, as any one may know, who looks about him. Illustrations crowd in upon us. The infidel Astronomers of Europe towards the end of the last century were delighted with the Astronomical tables of the Hindoos, when they came into their hands, as they overthrew the Chronology of the Bible, but soon the Astronomers were forced to acknowledge, that the tables were not founded on observations. The distance of the earth from the sun was, it was thought, settled long ago, but within the last few years several eminent Astronomers have come to the conclusion that previous calculations had been in a measure incorrect. Sir Charles Lyell, the patriarch of Geology in our country, has during his long and distinguished career not only modified, but in some cases entirely reversed his former views, as is known by every one slightly acquainted with his writings. In Physical Geography no fact was considered more certain, than that the comparatively mild climate of the British Isles was attributable to the Gulf Stream sweeping up the Coast of North America, and making its way across the Atlantic. How many eminent men have vouched for it! With what precision it is announced in scientific treatises! Yet as this Essay is being written the writer has fallen in with the interesting papers on this subject published in *Good Words*, in which the author Dr. Carpenter, who stands in the first rank of scientists, maintains there is not the slightest ground for such a notion, and traces the comparative mildness of our climate to an entirely different cause.

Not only is science continually correcting and modifying its former lessons, even as to facts, to say nothing of inferences, but now and then it completely upsets what it has formerly taught. This has been the case in reference to the point which perhaps more than any other has been recently considered the severest blow, which science has ever dealt at the Bible. We refer to the antiquity of man. Thirty and even twenty years ago, while scientific men affirmed the great antiquity of the globe, they taught with almost equal unanimity the recent

appearance of man on the earth. This was one of the subjects, on which Scripture and science seemed to be entirely agreed. We are now told science has discarded this notion, and asserts that many thousands of years have elapsed, how many it does not attempt to calculate, since man was an inhabitant of this world. The Bible does not teach Chronology more than any other science, but it certainly seems to pronounce strongly against such antiquity. We see into what a dilemma the Bible is brought. If some twenty years ago it had taught, in accordance with the writings of the Hindoos, Chinese, and other nations, the vast antiquity of the human race, it would have been condemned as utterly unworthy of credit, because contradicted by science. Science now maintains that man's origin goes back into a most remote period, and it declares against the Bible for teaching what itself taught a short time ago. Every believer in the Bible is convinced that so far as it comes into contact with the domain of real science, there can be no antagonism, but if it would accord with what is termed science at every succeeding period, it must undergo periodical recensions, and must affirm at one time what it has denied in the other.

We adduce one other illustration. With many it has been a favourite notion, that the Negro and the European cannot have had a common origin, as they are so different from each other. The teaching of the Bible regarding the unity of the human race is now condemned on the opposite ground that it merely teaches the unity of those called human beings, while it ought to teach the unity of all living things, man being the last development of the rudest form of life. The difference between the Negro and the European is a step compared with the vast space which separates the human being from his first progenitor, the rude mollusk. How can the Bible please science in these different moods!

These
mistakes
teach hu-
mility.

These facts, and others of the same kind, which might be easily adduced, are well fitted to teach humility and caution to both scientists and theologians. They are also fitted to inspire hope for the future.

Christian men are not infrequently charged with the depreciation of science. If the charge be just, we have not a word to say on their behalf, for we look on such depreciation as

arrant folly. Our men of science have accomplished wonders, for which all classes are deeply indebted to them, on the ground both of mental improvement, and material convenience. The more zealous and successful they are the greater are our obligations. As believers, instead of dreading scientific progress, our regret is that the age is not sufficiently scientific. As we ponder the alleged opposition between science and religion, we are convinced that it is in a great measure caused by the adoption of anti-scientific methods. When these are discarded, and the laws obeyed, to which the most distinguished men of science of former times paid their allegiance; we confidently look for the cessation of the strife.

We proceed to show what we mean when we say that as believers we deprecate anti-scientific methods, while rejoicing in the progress of science.

I.—*The great majority of the reading public have neither leisure nor ability to investigate and verify the facts alleged by scientific men.* All they can hope to do is to obtain some acquaintance with these facts, as set forth in popular works. To this public, outside the scientific circle, the writer of these Essays belongs. When facts are alleged by men of high standing, who have devoted their lives to scientific pursuits, and these facts are endorsed by their compeers, without any opposing statement from a competent quarter, they rightly challenge our implicit belief. What for instance could be more preposterous than for a non-scientific person to question Professor Tyndall's teachings about light and heat, founded as they are on the most careful experiments? Now and then scientific men discover they have committed mistakes, and when this is declared with due authority, the ordinary reader must either obey the new edict from the scientific cathedra, or betake himself to another territory.

I.—Scientific facts must be received on the testimony of scientific men.

II.—*Facts must not be confounded with inferences from facts.* The former may be beyond reasonable suspicion, while the latter may be worthy of rejection. The true scientific method, so far as we understand it, is to gather facts, examine the properties of things, note resemblances, note differences, and draw only those inferences, which the facts will justify. If the facts have to be eked out with suppositions, conjectures, and analo-

II.—Facts must be distinguished from inferences.

gies, the premises are vitiated, and the conclusion is worthless. We think we may say without arrogance that here some of our most notable scientists have erred most grievously. In saying this, we are following in the wake of several who for their scientific knowledge are specially entitled to express an opinion. They lament that their brethren are doing injury to both science and religion by pursuing methods which their illustrious predecessors would have condemned. One expresses himself thus, "In the indulgence of a spirit of hasty generalization, and in the habit of building up theories upon insufficient data, the present age is, in too many instances, a most unworthy successor of that of which I would take Sir Isaac Newton, the pattern of all sound philosophers, to be the type."

A glance at the questions eagerly discussed in our day will illustrate our meaning.

Sir Charles Lyell's work on the antiquity of man has given the question a prominence it had not before. Regarding that book Dr. Thomas Smith of Edinburgh says, "We have no hesitation in saying that Sir Charles Lyell's book on the antiquity of man is one of the most un-Baconian productions, that ever proceeded from a scientific man. One premise in each of his twenty arguments is indeed a fact, but the other is an assumption, and all of these assumptions are purely gratuitous, while several are notoriously and demonstrably false." When we read the strictures made on the book by so fair, truthful, and competent a writer as the late Archdeacon Pratt, we cannot but think Dr. Smith's censure to be just. One is bewildered to understand the reasons held for the length of time required, for instance, for the formation of peat, and the elevation and depression of the sea coast in different places, these calculations too being entirely contradictory to those the writer had previously made.

* Taking it for-granted that all Mr. Darwin's facts are correct, what a number of suppositions and conjectures, unaided by a solitary fact, must be put together to bridge the gulf which separates the facts from the conclusion, that man is the legitimate successor of the humblest form of life! Drops of rain, which fell ages ago, have left ineffaceable marks, birds of the most remote periods can be traced by the pressure of their feet, the

minutest organisms have been preserved, but where is the evidence for the transmutation of species? A scientific man declares, "There is not one example either in the existing or in the fossil world of a plant or an animal being descended from any but progenitors of its own species." Yet this is pronounced to be the only scientific account of man! Let Mr. Darwin have all the praise to which he is entitled for his researches and interesting facts, but those must hold their Bible with a very loose hand, who are ready to part with it, that they may embrace the very old dream of evolution, which has taken so many shapes, and has come to us in the new gay colours of natural selection and the survival of the strongest.

We just mention Sir John Lubbock's views of primitive man, as a howling savage. Let us by all means receive his facts, so far as they are attested, proving barbarism to have prevailed in ancient times in several countries, far away from the original seat of man, but these by no means bind us to the acceptance of his conclusion. That has been combated by several, we think with success. If our readers have not read the interesting articles on this subject by the Duke of Argyll, published in *Good Words* from March to June 1868, we cannot do better than suggest them for perusal.

Once more—What an amount of labour Chavalier Bunsen and others have bestowed on Ancient Egypt, and how hostile to Scripture in its obvious sense have their results been deemed! What has this labour come to? The words of the late distinguished scholar Sir G. C. Lewis have been often quoted, and they deserve to be quoted again. "Egyptology has a historical method of its own. It recognizes none of the ordinary rules of evidence; the extent of its demands upon our credulity is unbounded. * * Successive dynasties become contemporary dynasties; one king becomes another king, or several other kings, or a fraction of another king; one name becomes another name, one number becomes another number, one place becomes another place." Excavations in the valley of the Nile have been as unsatisfactory as excavations into the historical records of the past. A specimen of pottery found in a deposit was affirmed by Mr. Horner to be 13,000 years old, and now it is found that the pottery has marks of a Muhammadan date!

Do not such cases justify us in saying that the apparent antagonism between the Bible and science has been to a large extent caused, not by facts, but by inferences drawn from conjectures and suppositions, which are not only supported by facts, but are in several instances contradicted by them?

III.—A
candid
examina-
tion of
facts de-
manded.

III.—*The true scientific spirit demands a fair and candid examination of alleged facts.* We are not to ask whether they accord with our views or not. We are bound to look at them, and to estimate, so far as we can, the evidence adduced in their support. Is it not too plain that some notable men of science show in reference to the evidences of Christianity, its nature, and its claims, a spirit the very opposite of this? They are not indeed the only transgressors. Some theologians have erred in the same manner. They have rejected facts ascertained and attested by a succession of scientific men, and capable of being proved to every unprejudiced mind, because unable to reconcile the facts with their interpretation of the book received by them as the unerring Word of God, they taking the ground that the Bible is certainly true, and every thing opposed to it so certainly false, that it does not even deserve a hearing. By all means call such conduct narrowness and bigotry. What terms then should we apply to the corresponding conduct of some scientists?

Instance—
Miracles.

We have a striking illustration of the conduct of which we complain in the treatment miracles receive. A number of scientific men declare them to be impossible. They take the position that God has laid down laws for the regulation of all natural objects, from which He never deviates, that He has ever acted and will ever act in accordance with these laws, that miracles are a deviation from them, and therefore that they do not deserve to be placed even among the subjects of inquiry. They do however condescend now and then to cast a glance at the evidence adduced for the miracles of the Bible, and have no difficulty in reaching the conclusion, for which their preconceived notions had prepared them. In this *a priori* rejection of miracles, are there not unproved assumptions? It is assumed that scientific men have acquired such a perfect acquaintance with God's purposes and His mode of procedure, that they can authoritatively pronounce on what He will do, and on what He will not do, in all conceivable circumstances.

It is assumed that the order of the world is so indispensable, that it must be maintained without the slightest change, however subservient a deviation from it might be to the moral government of man, who is manifestly the highest creature on earth. It is assumed that while man is continually modifying and even counteracting one natural law by another, God is denied the liberty of thus using the laws which He has ordained, which He administers, and over which He has perfect control: It is assumed that God has made Himself the prisoner of His own laws, and cannot go beyond the prescribed course, while man can combine and use them for the accomplishment of his purposes. It is assumed that while man can freely communicate with his brother, man, and when one mode fails can betake himself to another, God is unable to send any message to man, the only one on earth that can hear His voice, however much that message may be needed, and that He cannot interpose on man's behalf, except through the ordinary processes of nature, however great might be the benefits, which a special interposition might confer. It is assumed that natural laws are identical with moral laws, as if deviation from the former would be deviation from the latter, although the former are only arrangements for the regulation of the external world, while the latter are founded on eternal rectitude, and are unchanging as God Himself. These and similar unproved assumptions are inconsistent with the very idea of a personal God, an infinitely wise, righteous, and good Being, who rules over all, and is free to make all subservient to His great and glorious purposes. Hence we find those who declare miracles and the supernatural to be impossible, if they maintain Theism at all, maintain it in a form, which is practical Atheism. They ascribe all to the forces of nature, and do not hesitate to represent nature, if we may so speak, as acting supernaturally. If, for instance, the forms of life have been continually rising into higher forms, is not this as remarkable as water running up a hill? Then the appearance of man,—what a stride was then taken! Did not nature, when it ushered him in, surpass itself? What achievement, worthy of being named with this, has it ever before or since displayed? We have sometimes thought, if such an anachronism be permissible, that if one of our men of science had

been present, when the first man appeared, he would have pronounced his existence an impossibility, as utterly beyond the power of nature to produce, and would have declared this new strange form to be a mere illusion.

We gratefully allow that the scientists of our day have conducted us farther into the domain of law in the natural world, than their predecessors had done. We do not however allow that they have done any thing towards disproving the possibility of miracles. We were formerly aware that the world is ruled by law, and miracles go on the supposition that it is so. Where no law exists there can be no deviation from it, by which God's special presence can be shown. The very fact then that law is now found to prevail in departments, where its presence had not hitherto been traced, extends the sphere, where miracles are possible, instead of tending to prove either directly or indirectly that they are impossible. God's law in the natural world holds on its undeviating course, so that we may fully depend on it, and regulate our course accordingly—otherwise what confusion would be wrought!—but we believe there is abundant evidence to prove, that in very rare and exceptional cases, a higher law has come in, the law of God's moral government, to modify the operation of natural law, for the securing of results of the highest value, which so far as we know could not have been otherwise attained. The operation of this higher law, in the bending of natural law to its purpose, can be proved only by evidence of peculiar clearness and strength, and no belief is due, where that evidence is not forthcoming. The miracles of the Bible are supported by evidence to which we confidently appeal. What we complain of as unscientific is the *a priori* assumption that miracles are impossible, and the consequent refusal to listen to evidence at all, or, which comes to the same thing, the approaching it with the foregone conclusion that it must be unworthy of credit.

IV.—Science condemns dogmatism on unstudied subjects.

IV.—*Dogmatism regarding subjects, of which we have mastered neither the principles nor the details, is surely opposed to the spirit of science.* In one department a person may be a giant, while in another he is a child, and the part of true wisdom is to know where one's strength lies, and to apply it accordingly. The proverb '*No autor ultra crepidam*' holds good for all time,

and it may be said for all classes. The theologian, who has had no scientific training, and possesses a mere smattering of scientific knowledge, acts a very unwise part, when he pronounces an opinion on some intricate and much debated scientific theme. Does not the man of science act with similar un-wisdom, who pronounces with all confidence on the subject of religion, to which he has never applied the energies of his mind, and regarding which he has taken up the most partial and superficial views?

We have all heard of the proposal made to test the efficacy of prayer by setting apart a ward in a Hospital, on the inmates of which the whole force of prayer should be turned, while other invalids under the same roof should receive the same medical treatment, but on their behalf no prayer should be offered. Much has been said about this proposal, and it is so instructive that it ought not to be soon forgotten. The proposal came from one man eminent in science, and was endorsed by another. The thought suggested to many minds on reading it might find expression in the words, "Their folly shall be manifest to all men." However eminent these scientists may be in their own departments, and however much they deserve to be heard, when they speak on their special themes, they are utterly unfit to guide the public mind on the subject of religion, because by such a proposal they show they have not apprehended even its elements.

Instance
—Prayer.

The proposal takes it for-granted there is no prayer-hearing God. It could not come from any person who allowed to his own mind there might be One, who succours men in answer to prayer, for then it would be seen at once to be impious and preposterous. If there be One, who has made heaven and earth, who has manifested His glorious character in the most varied and impressive forms, who ought to be revered, loved, and served by all His intelligent creatures, who watches over them all and governs them all in accordance with His wisdom and goodness, who encourages them to come to Him at all times and in all circumstances that He may give them the needed aid—and all this is firmly believed by every true Christian—it is monstrous to conceive that at the command of some Philosophers, He should come to their bar, to prove His existence,

and show His power and willingness to help, in the form they prescribe. It would be vastly more reasonable for the Queen of England to come to India, at the challenge of some "Cooly, who had denied there was such a personage. In the unprayed-for wards there might be many, for whom help was urgently needed, and to whom it would be a blessing, but from them it must be scrupulously withheld, and in the prayed-for ward there might be some to whom restored health would be a curse, but to them it must be given, and all to meet the demand of the Philosopher for proof that there is a God who can save! Can we conceive a more direct violation of the command, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

Then if the proposal were not in itself so absurd, how was the experiment to be made? Professor Tyndall evidently thought he could conduct it as accurately and successfully, as those experiments in light and heat, by which he has got such deserved praise. He thought he could keep out all disturbing elements, and watch, observe, weigh and measure spiritual influences, with all the ease with which he could conduct experiments in his laboratory, thus doing in the spiritual domain, what he has done so well in the natural. That the experiment might be properly made, it would be necessary to close human hearts, pleading for the suffering and sorrowful all over the world, and especially to close the hearts of those deeply interested in the persons occupying the unprayed-for wards. If such prayer could not be stopped, while the experiment was being made, God's ear must be shut against it, that full satisfaction might be given to Philosophic inquirers! No one knows better than the Professor, how to guard against every thing, which vitiates experiments in his own department, but so little did he see before him in the spiritual domain, that he could not discern those elements, which could not have been possibly excluded, and which would make his proposed experiment utterly worthless.

The efficacy of prayer is a subject much too great and difficult for us to discuss here. We would only throw out one thought. In arranging the system of nature, God has had a special regard to man, and to man in his highest relationship. Full scope has been left for man's energies without necessitating

any arbitrary change. Why should not scope be also given to his prayers? *We* could not administer natural law in connexion with man's efforts and prayers, without subjecting that law to arbitrary change, but it is surely vain to conclude from this, that the combination cannot be successfully effected by the infinitely wise God, whose resources are inexhaustible, and whose system with everything concerning it, in the words of a writer who denies the efficacy of prayer "is fore-ordained of countless ages." Law prevails in every department, in the inner and the outer world, and if useless in one department prayer is useless in all. The Bible teaches us that it should comprehend our entire life, with everything which can affect it, and in vain does Philosophy assail this great sanctuary of human hearts.

V.—*The depreciation of departments of knowledge, to which we are not led by our likings or our opportunities, is surely very unscientific.* Is not this too often done by the devotees of Physical Science in our day? The world within is surely far more important and interesting than the world without. The mind is the controlling agent in the pursuits of science. The mind lays down the laws, which science must obey. The mind suggests and directs the instruments, which science must employ. Then, it soars to questions of a far higher nature than those, with which Physical Science has to deal,—questions of duty, of right, of God, of immortality. Its facts are as capable of being gathered and classified, and of being generalized into laws, as the facts of Physical Science are. Yet how many in our day utterly depreciate the science of the mind, or prosecute it under the guidance of materialistic theories, which debase it, and cannot account for its primary, abiding facts! In reference to this highest department of science, we do not think our age will stand high in the estimation of the wiser age, which we must hope is before us. Our age will no doubt receive its meed of praise for its marvellous activity, for its progress in Physical Science, and for the application of science to the uses of life, but the reverence of that wiser age, when reviewing the science of the past, will we think be reserved for those master spirits of former times, that investigated with untiring zeal the facts of man's mental and moral nature, and arrived at conclusions

V.—Sci-
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worthy of God and man.* If our modern scientists had paid due attention to the human mind they would have escaped a narrowness, which has been very hurtful to themselves and others, and which has had much to do with the alleged antagonism between science and Scripture.

VI.—Science condemns the magnifying of apparent discrepancy.

VI.—*The magnifying of points of apparent discrepancy between science and Scripture is unworthy of the fair and impartial spirit in which science should prosecute its work.* From what is often said one might suppose that science had encountered the Bible along its whole line, and had everywhere overthrown it, while in fact the apparent discrepancy has been only on a few points, while in their general course they move in such different orbits, that there is no more danger of collision than among the heavenly bodies, as they speed on their way.

Truth and time will solve remaining difficulties.

While we believe for the reasons we have stated that the conflict, between science, as now prosecuted, and the Bible, is mainly caused by the employment of unscientific methods, and while in the interest of both we long for a more scientific age, we acknowledge that difficulties remain, which men of the most candid minds are yet unable to solve. Both theologians and scientists have yet to interpret their respective records more accurately than they have done, and if they do so in the spirit of unflinching truthfulness, we cannot doubt the day is near when they will meet in entire accord. We believe both Christian theology and science rest on the durable foundation of fact, and neither the one nor the other can be abandoned or depreciated, without the truth being wronged.

The extent of the subject discussed.

We have now to direct our attention to another quarter, where weapons have been forged to destroy the faith of Christians. May we here be allowed to say that we are afraid we are trespassing on the patience of our readers? We suspect that those who have been so kind as to follow us thus far, are

* When writing this sentence we are not forgetting that our age has produced such men as Mill, Bain, and Herbert Spencer. While ready to join in the universal tribute to their attainments, acumen, and ability, we think we have reason for believing, that neither their methods nor their conclusions will stand the scrutiny of truth and of time. In Sir William Hamilton indeed and his followers we have Mental Philosophers of another class, but even these we think do not rise to the rank of their predecessors in the originality and truth of their teaching.

wishing us to quicken our pace, and get to the end of our journey. We confess that the difficulty we foresaw from the beginning, of stating even the salient points of such great subjects within the limits of Essays, has been found greater than we had expected. We have often been inclined to hasten on, afraid that our remarks were becoming too extended, and then we have felt we were in danger, either of omitting something essential to our argument, or of stating it so slightly, that injustice was done to it. All we can say for ourselves is, that the subjects are to us of transcendent importance, and if they be so to our readers, they will the more easily pardon the length of our remarks. If our observations on the subject on which we are now entering be brief and slight, our readers, we hope, will charitably conclude we have confined ourselves to so meagre a statement from a wish to secure their goodwill.

We hear much in our day of Biblical Criticism. If we believe all we hear, we shall conclude it is some new science, which has gathered facts as certain as the facts of Physical Science, and that these facts conclusively disprove the genuineness and authenticity of the Biblical records, and thus overthrow the religion founded on these records.

Biblical
Criticism.

How does the case stand? During the present century a vast amount of learning has been brought to bear on the Sacred Scriptures. The Syriac, the Arabic, and the Chaldaic, the cognate languages of the Hebrew, have been profoundly studied along with the Hebrew itself. Their existing literature has been closely investigated. The history of the nations speaking these languages has been explored. On the Greek and Roman languages, with their respective literatures, learned men have bestowed the labour of years, with a view to the thorough study of the New Testament. These researches have been carried on in Germany with peculiar patience and zeal, but they have been by no means confined to Germany. The other countries of Europe have contributed their band of labourers, and in England of late years these studies have received increased attention.

It must be acknowledged that not a few of these learned men have arrived at conclusions destructive of the Scriptures

as the Word of God. If we stop with this statement, as many do, we stop with a half-truth, which becomes to us a lie, because we turn away from the other half truth necessary to complete it. The destructive critics are not allowed to walk the course. Conservative critics of equal learning have followed them step by step, and have contested their statements one by one. Their premises are declared to be untenable and their conclusions false. In such a case what are we to do? Even well educated Ministers, as a rule, have neither the learning nor the leisure to follow these men through the thickets of their criticism, while ordinary people of intelligence can scarcely come sufficiently near to have any conception of the battle. It would thus seem that Biblical Criticism is entitled to no influence on the minds of most, the averments of one party being neutralized by those of another, and we being unable to judge between them. We are not however reduced to this position of helplessness. There are considerations to aid us in forming an intelligent judgment.

I.—The
unscienti-
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I.—*The destructive critics, almost to a man, openly proceed on a principle, which we have already declared to be utterly unscientific. They maintain there cannot be the supernatural. They say there has been no miracle, no prophecy, and when either the one or the other is mentioned we are sure to have got on the trail of fiction. Thus Hitzig in his elaborate commentary on Isaiah lays down the principle. "A proper foreknowledge is not to be ascribed to the prophets. Over the eye of the Old Testament prophets in general there lay the very same darkness as to the future, to which the human race even during the existence of the Delphic Oracle was condemned." What is the result of this principle? If Isaiah wrote the latter part of the book which goes by his name, he was a prophet in the strictest sense of the term. But this was impossible. Therefore the latter part of the book was written not by Isaiah, but by one conveniently designated the Pseudo-Isaiah, or more mildly, Deutero-Isaiah.*

The destructive critics, proceeding on the principle, asserted in the words quoted from Hitzig, are agreed in rejecting the latter part of Isaiah, the book of Daniel, and many portions from the other prophets. The Tübingen school, as it has been called,

not only sets out with the axiom there is not the supernatural, but with the notion that the trained mind of itself can construct the history of the Christian Church. These learned men have shaped out the course it ought to have taken, and then they set to prove this is the course it has actually taken. The books of the New Testament are accepted or rejected, just as they are deemed favourable or hostile to the *a priori* theory which has been formed. No amount of external or internal evidence can save a book from rejection, which cannot be brought into accordance with the theory, while any book, which seems to favour it, is readily accepted, or at least so much of it, as can be turned to account. Dr. Donaldson in the Introduction to his Critical History of early Christian literature, after giving an account of the views held by the Tübingen School, says, "Such is the reconstruction of the early Church history and literature according to the doctrine of tendencies. One is utterly amazed how a man could deliberately sit down, and day after day, casting to the winds every fragment of historical evidence, build, and build after his own fashion, as Schwegler has done. He seldom troubles himself about giving reasons for his opinions. He merely brings out his perceptions or illustrations of the tendencies. Of course he does occasionally appeal to historical testimony—human nature must come out sometimes; but his appeals are generally very perverted and unsatisfactory; and the most signal proof of this is, that almost the whole scheme rests on the statements and thoughts of a work which is purely fictitious, the Clementine Homilies. The tremendous importance of this work to the Baurian School is a damaging sign of its inherent weakness. I need not say that I regard the whole of the Baurian scheme to be a pure fiction, as Bunsen has justly named it." Baur and his companions have been universally regarded as men of immense learning and great ingenuity, but the person must be credulous indeed, who is ready to accept conclusions reached by such methods.

II.—*The destructive critics pay very little attention to the positive reasons we have for accepting the several books of Scripture.* They either leave these reasons unnoticed or try to overthrow them by ingenious sophisms, by suggesting difficulties, II.—Destructive critics pay little attention to

positive reasons for accepting Scripture, and by wrapping us in the mist of learned quotations, which may puzzle us, but utterly fail to convince us. The writer of this Essay has some times tried to find out exactly what could be said against books, which he thought rested on the strongest evidence. He has carefully read what the hostile critics had to advance, and he has been surprised to find how completely the reason for belief has been in one case evaded, while in another case the evidence has risen unmoved above the attack made on it, as the rock rises above the waves which dash and break themselves at its base. We cannot do better than refer for illustration to the writings of that veteran critic Dr. Samuel Davidson. Take his early writings, and you find him the conservative critic, bent on upholding the genuineness and authority of the Sacred Scriptures. Take his late writings, and you find him bent on destroying what he once maintained. He treats with little respect the evidence he formerly advanced, but it seems to us he has completely failed to overthrow it.

III.—Their methods are unsatisfactory.

III.—*The methods pursued by destructive critics are as unsatisfactory as the principle on which they professedly act.* They go on in this fashion; 'Here is a word, which the writer in his acknowledged writings has not used. There is an expression, which has not the stamp of his mind. Here is a covert allusion to an opinion not then held, or a circumstance which had not then occurred. Here comes an illustration, which resembles one found in the writings of another author, and therefore it belongs to that author, and not to this.' For instance Knobel collects most carefully and minutely, all the words in the later portion of Isaiah, which are not found in the first part, and then concludes Isaiah could not be the author, as if an author could not at different and perhaps widely separated periods, however varied his subject, use new words and expressions without destroying the evidence of his identity. Knobel however takes good care to avoid all reference to the many very peculiar expressions found in both the earlier and later writings of Isaiah, which are not found in the works of any other author. Delitzsch after quoting several of these says, "The observation of such Isaian idioms, which run in equal numbers through the whole collection, richly counterbalances the isolated words and phrases fished out of the prophecies in dispute—

words and phrases which, because they do not occur in the acknowledged prophecies, are to be reckoned as proofs of the spuriousness of those others. The fair and just critic must have his eyes as open for what is conformable as for what is discrepant, and must not count but weigh both." No ancient writing, which has come down to us, can retain a character for genuineness, if these methods be just. The Eclogues and Æneid are so unlike that they could not have been written by one man Virgil, if our critics be right.

IV.—*The results which we are called on to receive as infallibly true are not infrequently so absurd, that our common sense revolts at them.* Let us listen—"The Elohist wrote this sentence, and the Jehovist wrote the next sentence. The original words stood thus. Then came a redacteur, who made this alteration. Another redacteur altered it to that form. A third and even a fourth redacteur made still further changes. That portion of a chapter belongs to one century, while this portion belongs to another.' All this is described as dogmatically, as if the original writers and the redacteurs were doing their work before our eyes. We simple people have gone on reading our Bibles, as if we had before us the original and genuine production, with the exception perhaps of very slight changes made by the slips of transcribers, but we were mistaken. Biblical Criticism commands us to receive the Bible as the most extraordinary literary patch-work the world has ever known, to which indeed the world can furnish no parallel. We must say we think we are safer under the guidance of common sense than of learning thus conducting itself.

IV.—Often the results are absurd.

For instance, what are we to make of the Pseudo-Isaiah? From the days of Isaiah down to the end of the last century, this usurper of a great name was never heard of. Jews and Christians for these many centuries have been utterly ignorant of his existence. Not the faintest reference to him has been made by any ancient author. But now our learned men, looking through their bran-new telescope, have discovered this bright star in the distant heavens of the past, and can report to us as accurately about it, as our astronomers can of the heavenly bodies they have brought to our knowledge. To doubt the existence of this newly discovered personage is in the opinion

of many to lose all claim to discernment. Yet there are some sufficiently audacious to surmise that this remarkable discovery should be put down not to a real object in the distant past, but to a speck in the telescope which has been used.

V.—The
endless
contradictions
of
advanced
critics.

V.—*The endless contradictions of those called advanced critics may well make us pause, when they demand submission to their statements.* They are tolerably agreed in the work of destruction, but scarcely two are agreed in the views they would have us to adopt. Are we not, by advancing this argument, cutting the ground from under our feet as Protestants? If disagreement prove a method to be wrong, is it not clear the Reformation was a mistake? So it has been often asserted, we believe without reason. Let us not confound things which differ. Biblical critics of the advanced school, as they are called, do not agree regarding facts. What one maintains the other disproves. The only agreement is in denying the supernatural and getting rid of the reasons advanced on its behalf. Far otherwise is the case with the Reformers and their Protestant followers. They have differed widely regarding such deep questions as the Divine Decrees, and regarding modes of Church Government, and have asserted their respective views with undue warmth and pertinacity, but there has been, and there is, a remarkable agreement between them, regarding the fundamental facts and doctrines of scripture. Any one may satisfy himself on this point who compares the confessions of the Reformed Churches. Never was the agreement closer between Protestants, who profess to make the Bible the Rule of Faith, than it is in our day. What a striking illustration of this was given by the recent gathering of the Evangelical Alliance in New York! It is a notorious fact, that at the so-called Ecumenical Council of Rome the question was keenly and fiercely discussed, "Wherein does the Infallibility of the Church reside?" the discussion divulging the antagonism, which separated the members. At New York, amidst divergent opinions on some points, there was a most cordial union in every thing essential, and Christian love ruled the entire proceedings.

It seems almost a point of honour with every new critic to come out with something different from what his predecessors

had advanced. Gesenius and Ewald are great names. Both believe in a Pseudo-Isaiah, but the former is sure he was in Babylon, and the latter is equally sure he was in Egypt. Baur, Bauer, Schwegler, and Ritschl are at one in assailing the supernatural element of the New Testament, but they are as much at war with each other in accounting for the facts, as they are with orthodox critics. There must be something radically wrong in methods, which lead to such contradictory results. If one cannot serve two masters, giving opposite orders, how is it possible for us to follow the guidance of a host of critics, who cannot agree except in the negations which they propound to us ?

If we were to depreciate such men as Gesenius, DeWette, Ewald, and others of the same class, we should only show our own folly. They have done much in promoting the more successful study of the Sacred Scriptures. Let them get all the praise to which they are entitled for their learning, talent, and industry. We only regret they have so largely used methods, which cannot lead to satisfactory results.

It would be still more foolish to depreciate Biblical Criticism. Who can believe the Bible without wishing it to be thoroughly investigated, assured that it is characterized by a truthfulness and an authority, which the closest scrutiny will fully establish ? Who can value the Bible without wishing its text to be the purest which the examination of ancient manuscripts can give to us, and its interpretation to be the most exact, which combined scholarship and piety can secure ?

The importance of Biblical Criticism.

Instead of expressing our own views on this subject it will be much better to give the views of Delitzsch, who stands high among his own countrymen, and, whose works translated in part into English have made him favorably known to many English readers. Speaking of Rationalistic Criticism he says, "It is shut up between the two preconceived opinions—"there is no proper prophecy ;" and its correlate, 'There is no proper miracle.' It calls itself liberal, and thus free, but, rightly looked at, it is in bondage. In this bondage it has two chains wherewith it fortifies itself against every impression of historic testimonies. Either it makes prophecy a retrospect, and history a myth ; or it explains the prophecies in question as

products of another much later period. A Biblical Critic will be looked upon as so much the greater, the more acutely he understands how to apply these two artifices." Delitzsch then proceeds to speak of Biblical Criticism in these terms. "Although it is stained with sin, yet sin is not its essence. It belongs to the many new branches of Church science, to which the reformation of the Church gave the impulse. Were we to wish it had never appeared, this wish has the appearance of pitiful apprehension lest Holy Scripture should not be strong enough to sustain its tests and assaults. Nay, it is a well authorized and necessary member in the organization of Church science; and since its unpleasant results can be overcome only by Criticism, there is no escape from it. Far removed, however, from being a necessary evil, it is rather a source of more profound Scripture knowledge. Without Criticism there is no insight at all into the historical origin of the Sacred Scriptures, and thus no history of Sacred literature is possible." There is much more to the same effect, which we cannot quote.

The strength of Christianity is its cumulative evidence. In our previous Essays we endeavoured to show by proofs furnished by the Scriptures themselves, that they bear the stamp of Divine authority. In this Essay our aim has been to show the reason we have for refusing to give up our faith on the alleged demand of science and criticism, as many would have us to do. Throughout the Essay we have taken a merely defensive attitude. If we be dislodged, it must be by other weapons than have yet been brought against us. This defensive attitude is sometimes necessary, but it is not the most pleasant to maintain. It is much more agreeable to set forth the positive reasons we have for belief, and to press on others the duty of yielding to these, if they cannot show their invalidity.

The cumulative evidence for Christianity is its strength. We would again recur to our favourite thought, that the cumulative evidence for Christianity is its strength, not only for repelling assault, but for attacking the strongholds of unbelief. This evidence comes from such widely separated quarters, it is composed of so many different elements, its various parts so fit into a consistent whole, and so point to one definite conclusion, that it is eminently fitted to satisfy the mind which apprehends it. Above all, Christianity recom-

mends itself to our firm belief, by its powerful appeals to our consciences and our hearts, by its adaptation to our moral wants and necessities, by its allying itself with everything good and true and just and holy, by its prompting us to aspire after moral and spiritual excellence, and by imparting to us the strength requisite for its attainment. We have only touched one corner of this great field, we have, if we may so speak, only glanced at one room in this great armoury. We shall be amply rewarded for our work, if any of our readers be led to explore this great field for themselves—if any of them be led to walk through this great arsenal, and so arm themselves from it, that they may not merely maintain their own ground, but make successful raids on the territory of unbelief.

The question may here be asked, 'If the evidence for the Divine origin of Christianity be so full and satisfactory, how can you account for the fact, that so many well-educated, well-conducted, and truth-loving men, all of whom have been brought up in Christian countries, and some of them in thoroughly Christian families, are unconvinced by it?' We are sorry to say this fact is so manifest, that it cannot be doubted. Not a few openly avow their unbelief, while others show it has gained their sympathy.

The fact
of unbe-
lief.

The *genesis* of unbelief, if we may use such an expression, is a very delicate subject, and yet it is so important, that we ought not to shrink from its consideration. If we say that persons have good ground for unbelief, we cast a slur on Christianity, as not possessing credentials sufficient to satisfy candid, thoughtful, and truthful minds. How can we say this, without unsaying what we have already advanced, without contradicting indeed our strongest convictions? If on the other hand we maintain that persons reject Christianity because they are bent on wickedness, and will not listen to the truth,—that Cowper was right when he said of the unbeliever,

Its gene-
sis.

'Scripture is still a trumpet to his fears:

What none can prove a forgery may be true;

What none but bad men wish exploded, must'

many unbelievers will declare we are doing them a gross injustice. They will tell us that love of truth, not of falsehood,

has led them to the conclusions at which they have arrived. No one will deny, that many are bent on sinful self-indulgence, that they hate restraint, and are most ready to believe the book untrue, which throughout has so threatening an aspect towards them. There are however unbelievers of another stamp. They do not give themselves up to vicious indulgences, and they maintain an upright and honourable bearing. Is it possible so to place this matter, that we may uphold the claims of Christianity, and yet say nothing, which the consciousness of readers will reject as unjust? If we understand Christianity at all, it gives the first place to truth and love, and it repudiates the advocacy, which violates either. Both are in entire accord, though it is so difficult for us to render equal allegiance to both.

A short
way of
settling
unbelief.

One short way of settling this question may be thus stated; 'Christianity is from above. Man is of below. Christianity demands holiness, but man is set on unholiness. Christianity condemns our corrupt nature, but man cherishes it as his life. Hence unbelief is welcome to him.'

Not fully
satisfac-
tory.

However uncharitable we may be called, we must say in the interest of both truth and love, this statement goes to the root of the matter, but if left in this naked form, it does not give the whole truth, it may suggest what is false, and it is certainly more fitted to irritate than to convince those to whom it is applied. The question deserves to be closely pondered, and to be looked at from different sides.

Sceptical
thoughts.

We can scarcely suppose any person to have been all through his career a stranger to sceptical thoughts, who has given any measure of attention to the subject of religion. In the government of the world how much is there to perplex and distress us! How different are things from what we might have expected under the rule of an all-wise, all-righteous, and all loving-God! What a riddle are we to ourselves! While outside of the Bible there is much, which is painfully inexplicable, in the Bible itself there is much for which we are not prepared. We find a statement in one part, which we cannot reconcile with a statement in another part. Here we find something, which does not seem to comport with the righteousness of God. There we find something which seems repugnant to His love.

We meet with doctrines, which in one aspect are very mysterious, and in another repulsive to us. Some things are found, which we may think would be better omitted, and other things omitted, which we may think ought to be found. Many such thoughts have presented themselves to readers of the Bible. Sometimes they have been slight and fleeting, and at other times they have seized and held fast the very spirit. Sometimes the struggle has been long and keen, and in other cases it has come to a speedy end. We can scarcely take up the biography of any one who has had a measure of mental vigour, and has exercised a strong religious influence on others, who has not known more or less of this inward turmoil and strife. Some who have been signally successful in Christ's service have passed through untold agony on their way to strong and abiding faith.

Such doubting thoughts cannot be authoritatively suppressed. It is useless to denounce them as suggestions of Satan. If indeed there be no earnestness in the person to whom these thoughts have suggested themselves, if he merely amuse himself with the subject, he deserves little of our sympathy or respect. If however these questions be earnestly pondered, and if there be an honest desire to know the truth, the mind thus occupied ought to be regarded with deep sympathetic interest, and help should be rendered, wherever an opportunity is afforded. The writer of this Essay knows too well from experience what the struggle is to entertain harsh thoughts regarding it.

Cannot be
authori-
tatively
suppressed.

Many are ready, on the ground of experience, to vouch for the fact that the struggle has often issued in an assured faith, which is never afterwards seriously disturbed. These successful combatants with unbelief have felt their ignorance, their blindness, their proneness to go astray, and have sent up a cry to heaven for light and help, even when the Glorious One there was so wrapped in clouds, that they could not discern Him. The cry has been heard, and light has broken through the cloud. Their faith is all the stronger for the victory it has achieved. They are by no means able to solve all the difficulties, which had staggered them, but they see the reasons for belief to be so strong as to satisfy their understanding, con-

The issue
of the
struggle
in faith.

science, and heart. They find in the government of the world the very difficulties, which had seemed so formidable in the Bible, and they see that to give it up on that account would be to take the road, which ends in the denial of a moral government altogether, in other words, in down right atheism. If the difficulties of faith be great the difficulties of unbelief are seen to be insuperable. These persons begin to live what they believe, and the living of the Christian life is speedily found to be the strengthening of the Christian faith. As they hold on their way, experiencing in the degree in which they are dominated by the truth, as it is in Jesus, an impulse to all holy and loving thoughts and deeds, succour in temptation, consolation in sorrow, a calm deep joy among the vicissitudes of life, and hope in the darkest hour, there is nothing within them on which unbelief can fasten. Both reason and conscience revolt at the thought that a lie can accomplish the work of the highest truth. In their case the words of the Saviour are fulfilled. "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance." Their faith by exercise becomes stronger and stronger.

The issue
in unbelief.

What shall we say of those, who have emerged from the struggle on the shore of unbelief? Shall we say that they have never had any earnestness, that they have consciously turned away from evidence, lest it should force conviction? To speak thus would be to sin against truth. It would however be sinning against the truth of God, if we were to say that the unbelief of such persons is their misfortune and not their fault, that they may be pitied, but ought not to be blamed. The blame must be thrown either on Christianity or on the unbeliever, and we cannot hesitate as to the door, at which it ought to be laid.

Too much
attention
given to
objec-
tions

Unhappily in many a case the objections to Christianity have received much more attention than the answers given to them. The difficulties in the way of belief have been continually pondered, while the difficulties in the way of unbelief have been disregarded. The mind has never brought itself to contemplate and dwell on the cumulative evidence for the Divine origin of Christianity, and has consequently never received the impression that evidence, when combined, is fitted to make.

Confining our view to this matter of faith, as an intellectual question, we are of opinion this failing to look the subject fully in the face, this most inadequate attention to the proofs adduced, is a main cause of unbelief.

Not infrequently persons engaged in this inquiry fail to place vividly before their minds the obvious facts of our moral nature, and of God's moral government. Christianity proceeds on the supposition of these facts, and if they be disregarded, the inquiry cannot be successfully prosecuted. When these facts are discarded from the view, persons often launch out into a sea of speculation, and mistake clouds on the horizon for solid land. To use another figure, they elaborately weave a web of which their own fancies form the warp and woof, and regard it with much complacency, so long as they keep it from being touched by the keen edge of fact, which when applied tears it to pieces. It is wonderful how many become so enamoured of their airy speculations, that for them they are ready to reject the Bible. Airy speculations.

Many are led into unbelief by the tone of the society they keep, and the books they read. In our day unbelief permeates society, especially cultivated society, in the most subtle, winning, and varied forms. In conversation how often does one hear remarks, which if not openly infidel, have an infidel tendency ! With what apparent eagerness and pleasure is everything welcomed, which seems to bear hardly on old-fashioned faith ! What an air of superiority is there to those simple souls, that accept the traditions of their fathers ! This treatment of Christianity tells powerfully on eager and inexperienced persons, who aspire to a character for culture and discernment. They will not be behind their fellows. They will not be relegated to the class of the hopelessly prejudiced and benighted. We have with our own eyes observed in some cases the process going on. Then the newspaper, the periodical, the book are all ready to co-operate with the tone of society, in alienating the youthful mind from the Bible. The more intelligent, thoughtful, and refined persons are, the greater in many a case is the hurtful influence exerted over them. They are never tired of studying writings like those of Goethe, Schiller, Heine, Taine, and our own Carlyle, and they become imbued with their spirit, which when not directly anti-Christian, is little in accord with the The tone of society.

teachings of the Bible. There is no relish for books, which set forth the authority, the nature, and the workings of Christian faith, however able these books may be. Such works are either disregarded, or get such a grudging glance, that no right estimate of them can be formed. What can the result be but unbelief more or less pronounced?

The confidence of unbelief.

The tone of confidence assumed in the talk and writings of unbelievers tells on many minds. The conclusions of unbelief are set forth as absolute verities, which every candid and truthful mind must receive. The advocates of Christianity, as a supernatural system, are spoken of as clinging to a foregone conclusion, which has for ever lost the spell it once possessed over human minds. We observed the other day an Essay by a very able man in defence of the Pentateuch, dismissed with the remark 'behind the age,' because it combated what Colenso and men of his stamp had advanced. Who would not like to be up to the age? Who would not like to be ranked with the thoughtful, the cultivated, the lovers of truth? In some circles the rank can be obtained only by abjuring belief in a supernatural revelation, and there are persons who consider the rank so high, that they do not hesitate to pay the price demanded.

The apparent liberty of unbelief.

We may mention in this connexion the apparent liberty, which unbelief gives. We do not refer now to liberty of conduct. We refer to liberty of thought. To many it is very pleasant to roam, as they will, over the fields of thought, and to form any notions they like, unled and unchecked by superior authority. The Bible lays down the law definitely on many subjects, and there are persons who reject it, because it interferes they think with their just liberty.

The inconsistencies of Christians.

It must be acknowledged that the inconsistencies and little-nesses of professing Christians have powerfully helped the cause of unbelief. There are not a few, who are shocked at the thought of their children being infidels; and yet these children cannot see in their parents any subjection to the religion, to which they profess to be attached. How natural is it to conclude it is all a pretence! Even when parents are thoroughly Christian, and aim at living Christian lives, it cannot be denied, that too often there are weaknesses and inconsistencies, which are faithfully noted by their children, and if unbelief

be rife around, its access is thereby smoothed. If these young persons, supposing their judgments to be correct, though in fact they are often incorrect, would only consider what the Bible requires, and how opposed it is to every thing unlovely and wrong, they would see how they were to their own injury failing to mark the difference between the Bible, and the inconsistencies of those, who believe in the Bible. Let only the instructions of the Bible be carried out, and what just cause for complaint could remain! Those who earnestly wish their children to escape the snares of unbelief ought continually to guard against every thing, which would misrepresent the truth. When young persons go out into the world they see, or think they see, the inconsistencies and littlenesses which stumbled them at home. They often take a dislike, not infrequently an unfounded dislike, to Christian people, while they are drawn towards thoroughly worldly persons by their pleasing manners and cultivated tastes.

A conscious failure in acting out what at the time was deemed true greatly aids unbelief in its insidious approach to the mind. There can be very few, if any, brought up under Christian influences, who have not had at times a strong desire to lead a Christian life. They have had convictions, have felt their need of the Saviour, and their hearts have been towards Him. They set to reading their Bibles, and they practise prayer. But they make no progress. They shrink from close contact with Christian people. They take no part in Christian work. Their feelings are denied all exercise, and of course soon expire. The Bible becomes by and by a neglected book, day after day not a verse is read, and the very form of prayer is in many a case abandoned. When speculative infidelity prevails, how can such persons but fall into it? In them our Lord's words are fulfilled, "Whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." They have the Gospel, they know it, and it has been pressed on their acceptance, but they have it not by any experience of its power. Why should they care to retain that to which they attach no value? These persons would be well satisfied to remain nominal believers, where all are such, but when unbelief avows itself, it is most natural they should give in their adherence to it.

A failure to act out what is seen to be true.

The shades of unbelief. The unbelief thus formed is of many shades, from a bold unflinching avowal, to a gentle questioning of the supernatural origin of Christianity. There is still on the part of many an attendance on public worship. There is a profession of respect to religion. There is much admiration of the moral excellence of Jesus Christ. The works of those great Artists, who have given all their powers to the pictorial illustration of our Lord's life and death, are highly appreciated. The head crowned with thorns seems to be reverently contemplated. Poetical representations of our Lord and His teaching are highly esteemed. But still unbelief in all its baleful power is there. Christ is not allowed to draw near as Saviour or Lord. There is no subjection to His authority, and no acceptance of His salvation.

Summary. We have endeavoured to show how the struggle with doubts and objections ends with some in belief, and with others in unbelief. What we have said may be thus summed up: In the case of some there is a crying to God for help, there is a deep sense of both ignorance and sin, the nature of the Gospel and the grounds on which it rests are earnestly pondered, light breaks in, the Christian life is entered on, and faith obtains the rule over the spirit. In the case of others there may be earnestness, but there is no deep abiding conviction of the evil of sin, the rising feeling towards Christ is allowed no exercise and is extinguished, one-sided views engross the vision of the mind, an unhappy dislike begins to be entertained towards the Bible, towards prayer, towards Christian people, towards Christian work, surrounding circumstances are unfavourable to spiritual character, and unbelief in one of its many forms has no difficulty in establishing its sway.

The evil effect of unbelief. In every case this unbelief is mischievous. Even in its mildest form it keeps the soul apart from the comfort, the guidance, the moral succour, and the hope which God's Word is fitted to impart. The strangest thing of all is, that notwithstanding the momentous issues at stake, persons often remain in a state of indecision, unbelief having the predominance, and yet even to their own minds they do not seem to have formally and distinctly discarded faith.

In tracing the *genesis* of unbelief our aim has been, while upholding the claims of the Bible, to keep to facts so far as we

can observe them, and to say nothing, which can be justly deemed either uncharitable or untrue.

How is all this to be reversed? How are those to rise into faith who have gone down into unbelief? We have already indicated the course to be pursued, when speaking of the struggle, which has in many an instance issued in the cordial acceptance of the Bible. It is no doubt a difficult one, and it is doubly difficult in the case of those who have yielded themselves to unbelief, but we are convinced it is the right one, which when followed conducts to most happy results. It is true to a proverb that the descent is easy, while the ascent is difficult. If we rightly set out on the ascent, we shall know in our experience the aid of the Holy Spirit, which appears so mysterious and unmeaning to those who have neither sought nor obtained it, but which is felt to be so precious by those who have received it.

The way
up to faith
from un-
belief,

A great question comes in here for our consideration, What is the position which believers and unbelievers respectively occupy? Not infrequently the case is thus represented; 'If the Bible be true, how great an advantage do I, a believer, receive from it now, and what a glorious reversion is there for me in another state! Even if it be not true, what harm does it to me? It now gives me comfort, it inspires me with hope, and in the most trying hour of death it will cheer and sustain me, even if my hope beyond be not realized. But if the Bible be true, how does it stand with you as an unbeliever? If Christ be Saviour and Lord, how can you appear before Him? How fearful is the punishment, which awaits you for your rejection of Him! We are safe at any rate, even on your showing, but on our showing, which you must acknowledge may turn out correct, you are exposed to the greatest peril.' There is force in this representation, and yet the real question is, What is true? Falsehood in the end can do us no good. Truth we need, and truth we must have. We cannot accept what does not come to us with the stamp of truth. Every believer in Christ is assured that Christianity is of God. He has reasons for this conviction, which he is ready to state on every fitting occasion.

The posi-
tion of be-
lievers
and unbe-
lievers.

... In the course of these Essays, we have in various connexions

mentioned the inestimable benefits conferred by faith on its subjects all through life, on to its close. We need not repeat what we have already advanced.

Take a-
way faith
and what
have we?

It is surely a fair question to ask those who would deprive us of faith, and the benefits it confers, 'What would you give us in its place?' If a person were to come to me, and tell me to pull down my house as it was badly planned, and not fit for occupation, I should ask him kindly to point out a better, ready for my use, before proceeding to the work of demolition. I would scarcely thank him, if he pointed me to the canopy of heaven, and told me that under it I could safely dwell. I require shelter from sun, rain, and weather, and glorious though the canopy of heaven be, I require some humbler covering between me and it. If told that my food is wanting in nutritious quality, and that I ought to give it up, I should be loath to do so, if something better were not placed within my reach. Even my poor fare is better than a luminous mist, from which I can get no nourishment at all. I know something of what faith can do for me. Pray tell me what unbelief can do.

What has unbelief to offer us for the sustenance of our souls? To us the fare appears as unsubstantial as a golden mist would be to a man perishing from hunger. Does God exist? It is a moot question. If He does, He is the Unknown, regarding whom persons may form conceptions, but to these no certainty can be attached. Whether there be a God or not, there can be no miracles, no supernatural revelation, no answer to prayer, where the laws of nature are concerned, and as law certainly prevails in every department, there can be no answer to prayer at all.

What is our position according to these views? We have no Father, no God to whom we can go, who pities us and is ready to help us. We are to aim at doing the right, and avoiding the wrong, but there is no Moral Governor, to whom we can look in our aspirations after excellence. We cannot but meet with trials, vexations, and disappointments, for which it is well nigh impossible to account, and we must bear them as we can. The idea of a God of consolation is a dream. As to a sense of guilt, a feeling of demerit, which craves for pardon, the best thing we can do is to repress all such sentiments as

essentially morbid. Then as to death ! The human mind in all ages has projected itself into the state beyond the grave, both the ignorant and the enlightened, but now we are told that nothing is known regarding it, and nothing can be known.² Not one ray of light shoots through that darkness. The veil is impenetrable, and we must get to the other side, before any thing can be discovered. Death is then simply a leap in the dark—and what a leap ! It is hard for us to conceive how it can be without fear. It is inconceivable it can be with hope. At the most solemn hour of life, when we are leaving it, we are to be absolutely alone, with no guide to show us the way, no arm to sustain us, no voice to cheer us. If these negations be well founded, we are in a far worse position than those were, who lived before the days of Christ. The thoughtful men among them felt their ignorance, and hoped for a day of light, but we are now told science makes the advent of such a day impossible.

No one who is in any degree acquainted with the course of thought in our day will say that the statement just made is exaggerated. Dr. Matthew Arnold, the Apostle of Culture, in his recent work, ‘*Literature and Dogma*,’ in consistency with views previously advanced, treats with scorn the doctrine of God’s personality. The gist of his views we find in the following extracts, “What did the Jews mean by the Eternal? The Eternal what? The Eternal cause? * * They meant the eternal righteous who loveth righteousness. They had dwelt on the thought of conduct and right and wrong, till the *not ourselves*, which is in us and around us, became to them adorable, eminently and altogether as a power which makes for righteousness.” “God is simply the stream of tendency, by which all things fulfil the law of their being.” We observe Dr. Arnold speaks of the eternal righteous *who* loveth righteousness. Is it not a just inference from this singular sentence, that he is sufficiently emancipated from superstition to avoid saying the righteous *One*, while he is so far under its spell, as to say ‘the eternal righteous *who*,’ not *which*, ‘loveth righteousness?’ This then is the last dictum of culture. Wherever we meet in the Bible the word ‘God,’ we are to banish all notion of a person, (this is quite unbelievable) and to fix our

The views
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art Mill.

minds on 'the not ourselves' and 'the stream of tendency.' Then the Bible becomes the plainest and the best of books! We have not for many a day met with any thing, which has saddened us more than Mr. John Morley's account of a conversation recently held with his illustrious and now deceased friend John Stuart Mill. Mr. Mill is represented as speaking favourably of "pure theism." In answer to the objection that theism, however pure, "retards improvement by turning the minds of some of the best of men from social affairs," we are told Mr. Mill replied that theism was "useful as a provisional belief, because people will identify serviceable ministry to men with service to God." The culture of our age has brought us to this. One distinguished literary man objects to theism in any form, as opposed to man's good, and the man deemed by many the foremost of our century, and whose personal character is spoken of in the highest terms, inclines to a 'provisional' belief in God, till something better can be substituted! Here we have the outcome of the highest and most cultivated intellect, working out for itself the great problems of the universe.

The religion of intuition. Miss Cobbe.

We must not forget that unbelief has sometimes taken a course the opposite of that we have been describing. It declares in strong terms, and with the accent of full conviction, the personality, the fatherhood, the moral government of God, His love to His intelligent creatures, His supreme regard to their moral improvement, and the certainty of a bright world beyond the grave. The distinctive doctrines of the Bible are rejected, because they are pronounced incompatible with God's goodness and righteousness, and a great hindrance to the attainment of true piety. Lord Herbert of Cherbury was the great advocate of this form of infidelity in the 17th Century, and Miss Frances Power Cobbe is, so far as we know, its most illustrious living representative.

The teachers of this school maintain that intuition, not a traditional religion, is the source of all true knowledge of God. It can be demonstrated, that the views of God and of a future state maintained by these writers were not derived from intuition, but from the traditional religion they so much scorn. Here and there sentences are found in the writings of heathen sages, which seem to indicate the possession of right

views of God, of man, and of a future state, but these are only flashes of lightning in a dark night. We have only to make ourselves better acquainted with these sages, to find that their predominant views were utterly inconsistent with those a few culled sentences would suggest. When Miss Cobbe in her "Religious Duty" quotes from Hindoo books, does she really think any one of these contains her views of God, of man, and of a future world? In the Bible alone are views resembling hers consistently maintained, and yet how indignantly does she cast down the ladder by which she has ascended, praising indeed the Bible as a noble book, as even she must do, but denying it to be the source of her religion, and declaring it to have no authority over her judgment and conscience, beyond that which its own merits, as a book, carry with it! Strange to say in the very volume, containing the views of God alone deemed worthy of Him, are the doctrines asserted in the plainest terms, which are pronounced incompatible with these views, and these doctrines are set forth to secure the great end of true religion—the conformity of our character to that of a holy, righteous, and merciful God. Not only so, but these doctrines have produced, and are producing this very effect in those who heartily accept them.

As right views of God have not been derived from intuition, it is equally certain that they cannot be retained by intuition. When the sun has sunk beneath the horizon, the western sky retains a measure of light and heat, and sheds them down on the earth, but gradually the cold dark night obtains full sway. Lord Herbert's followers took his infidelity, and made it more intense, but they left behind his glowing piety, and this we have no doubt will be the case with those who take Miss Cobbe as their guide. Right views of God and an unwavering belief in a future state have never been retained on the ground of natural religion. The very first principle avowed by intuitionists of this class—that we are to attribute to God only that we would deem right and good in man—when carried out, lands us in Atheism or Pantheism. Believers in Christ are assured by the teaching of their own consciences, the great broad facts of God's government of the world, and the lessons of revelation, that God is infinitely holy, righteous, and good, and that

He ever acts in accordance with this character, but they also believe, that His ways and thoughts are as high above ours as the heavens are above the earth, and that we must have God's own perfection to understand all the actings of His righteousness and love. We cannot reflect on the laws of God's providential government, as administered continually around us, without seeing much which diverges from what we, with our notions of goodness, would deem to be demanded. How could it be otherwise, when we remember our very limited vision, our feeble powers, our low moral tone? Children have early a sense of justice, but they often deem that unjust in their parents, which as they advance they see to be just. The people of this country have the sense of justice as much as we have, and greatly admire it, but there is much in our government, the justice of which they cannot perceive. What a distance is there between us and the ever blessed God! We look up to Him, we bow before Him, we love Him as our Father, we obey Him as our Sovereign, and when Christian principle rules us, such is the surrender of ourselves to Him, that we put in Him implicit trust, even when His ways are far beyond our comprehension.

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When we give ourselves up to the principle, that God's righteousness in His government must be perceived by us in order to its being revered, we are ready to stumble. When God's providential arrangements are observed, and they are made patent by facts continually presented to our minds, the tendency will be to conclude that God has no personality, that properly speaking there is no moral government—otherwise these arrangements would certainly be different—and that only great strange forces are at work to which we must conform ourselves as well as we can. In such circumstances, to some minds Pantheism, to others down right Atheism, becomes the only solution, if either deserves that name. Along with a belief in a personal God, and a moral government, departs belief in a future state of separate spirits. Apart indeed from revelation such a state may be surmised, but cannot be proved.

The more we look at intuition, the more shadowy does it appear, and the more uncertain is it in its operation. Such men as Herbert Spencer, John Stuart Mill, and Lewis have

surely the tuitional faculty as well as Miss Cobbe, and yet their intuition has brought them to views the opposite of hers. Is not this intuition a universal gift, though of course better exercised by some than by others? How strange is it then, that the intuition of one like the author of "Religious Duty" should set itself on the great subjects of sin, its course when unchecked, retribution, propitiation, and prayer, in direct antagonism to the intuition of the human race from age to age! When we come to the Bible, we find the explanation of the great facts of man's mental and moral history, and have set before us the provision, which meets all his wants.

We are every now and then gravely told that science is to be the religion of the future. This is one of those expressions which show that some men of high note in the realms of science, know not the first elements of religion, on which they pronounce so strongly. Physical Science the religion of the future! When a person falls and hurts himself, he has to contemplate the law of gravitation, to which he has not paid sufficient attention! When disease assails us, we are to think of the laws of health, which we have in some way broken, or of the conditions of health, with which we have not been able to comply! When a limb is dislocated, we are to betake ourselves to the study of anatomy! When we are oppressed by a sense of sin, we are to think of morbid action on the brain, by our digestive system being disordered, or by the sluggish motion of the blood, and to adopt measures of cure accordingly! Among the various troubles of life, we are to get comfort by thinking of the laws of nature, which in so many ways affect us! When we come to die we have to think of the bodily machine, no longer fit for work, either worn out by long use, or prematurely broken down by disease or accident! Physical Science is excellent in its place, but how it can be a religion to persons constituted and circumstanced as we are, is simply incomprehensible.

The opinion seems to us equally inapt, that we should attend to religion, and let the abstractions of theology alone, the supernatural being the fountain of all these abstractions. For instance, when reading the Gospels, we are to receive the moral teaching they convey, but we are to pass by all that is

Science
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Religion,
not theo-
logy.

said about Christ, as the Son of God, the Saviour of men, the Lord of all, the worker of miracles, the revealer of a future state. It is impossible to conceive of religion, which does not rest on theology, that is on some doctrine concerning the person, character, and government of God. The theology of the Bible is so precious to the believer, because he knows it to be the source of the highest religious feeling, and of the noblest religious action.

The religion of Humanity. What shall we say of the religion of Humanity? Man, finding weakness in himself, and in all around him, is to become strong by adoring Humanity in the aggregate, or the abstract! Persons, with bodies like ours, might as well seek to turn a cloud into a soft luxurious couch.

Secularism. As to Secularism, pure and simple, it will do for man, when he has effectually suppressed his moral nature, and has dismissed his moral wants,—but not till then.

The dismal negations of unbelief. The more we ponder these questions, the more are we impressed with the thought, that the negations and uncertainties of unbelief are dismal, and that they have nothing to meet our highest wants. These negations can indeed assume bright colours, and in the time of health and prosperity persons may go after them, as children on a summer's day go far from home in the chase of butterflies, but when the night gathers, and the storm falls, they are distressed to find no father's house at hand to shelter them. With such negations man can never be permanently satisfied. Rather than retain them, he will betake himself to superstition, and he cannot be condemned for doing so. It is vain to say that faith is very good for the poor and the ignorant, but that the higher and more cultivated can get on without it. The man of the highest culture and of the most refined ideas is as exposed to sorrow, trial, and change, as his neighbour of coarser mould. He has like others moral wants to be supplied. The philosopher has to face death as well as the clown, and its solemnity, it might be thought, would be deepened to him instead of lessened, by his wider mental range.

Is it so that no provision has been made for us as possessed of a rational and moral nature, and as living in a world full of difficulty and peril? If so, He who has amply provided for

all His other creatures, however low in the scale, has made no provision for the pressing wants of His highest creature, wants arising from the highest part of his nature, and wants which must be supplied, if he be either good or happy. Let those believe this, who can believe it. To us, it is utterly unbelievable. If provision has been made, where are we told of it, if not in the Bible ?

When we look at the miserable negations of unbelief, we are surprised that men apparently estimable and high minded, should strive with so much zeal and with such evident zest to demolish that, which for ages has given, and which continues to give so much moral impulse, comfort, and hope to their fellow-creatures, while they furnish nothing to fill the void they are bent on making.

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“The world by wisdom knew not God,” and the controversies of our time prove that the world by wisdom retains not the knowledge of God imparted to it. Leaving the revelation of Himself, which God has given in His Word, the wisest and the ablest of men do not arrive at any assured belief even in the existence of God. That revelation however will continue to commend itself to humble minds, thirsting after God and goodness, because it bears His seal, and is eminently adapted to their case. They shudder when even in thought they find themselves within the dreary and chilling region of unbelief, and they rejoice to dwell within the light and glow, which faith imparts. They constantly and earnestly desire that all may come and partake of their joy.

The light
and glow
of faith.



Hindooism Contrasted with Christianity.

We propose to consider in this Essay the main features of Hindooism, the religion most widely professed in India.

The Divine origin of Christianity is shown by its own excellence, In our previous Essays we endeavoured to show the testimony which Christianity gives to its Divine origin by its own manifest excellence. The sun requires no testimony beside that which itself supplies by its light and heat. We endeavoured to show that in the same manner the character and life of our Lord Jesus Christ, as described in the gospels, are radiant with a moral grandeur, which needs only to be contemplated and appreciated, to win and awe every heart. We pointed to the characteristics of the Bible, as proving it to have been produced by a higher than human authorship. We referred to the many collateral proofs we have of its being the Word of God, but we dwelt on the evidence itself presents, as that which is most accessible, which speaks most directly to the highest part of our nature, and which furnishes the best basis for an unwavering conviction of its heavenly origin.

and by its superiority to other systems. We now enter on a train of argument to which we alluded in general terms, when we said that the Bible throughout is entirely free from the Naturalism, the Pantheism, and the Polytheism, which form the main features of the religions man has framed for himself. If the religion of the Bible differ, not in superficial circumstances, but in essential principles, from all other religions, and if the difference be wholly in its favour, by its propounding, as no other religion does, views of God and man, which do honour to the Most High, commend themselves to our conscience, stimulate us to the pursuit of all

excellence, and are accordant with the facts of history, the question arises, How are they so different, and why is the difference so vastly in favour of the Bible? The framers of these religions have often had a great advantage over the writers of the Bible in mental culture and outward circumstances, and on the supposition that all religions have had a merely human origin, the difference ought to have been on the other side. If we in vain seek for an explanation of the phenomenon in the powers of the respective parties, we are shut up to the conclusion, that the religions prevalent in the world have had a merely human origin, while the religion of the Bible is Divine. If the difference were slight or incidental, no such inference could be drawn, but we have a profound conviction that the difference is great, we might almost say, infinite, and can only be accounted for by our seeing on the one side the hand of man, and on the other, the hand of the ever blessed God. The perception of this difference leads the believer to rest, if possible, more securely than ever in the mansion of faith to which he has betaken himself, as by its infinite superiority to other abodes, prepared for human hearts, he has additional evidence presented to him, that it has been erected by the Father of spirits. The essential difference is denied by unbelievers, but we are satisfied it can be fully proved, and the proof, when discerned, is as disconcerting to unbelief, as it is strengthening to faith. The subject on which we are now entering is then closely connected with the object we have in view in these Essays, of showing the immovable basis on which the faith of the Christian rests.

The argument founded on the superiority of the religion of the Bible to all other religions, though collateral, has always been felt to possess much force. Pious and intelligent Jews of old clung the more closely to their Covenant God, the more they looked at the objects worshipped by surrounding nations. 'Their rock is not as our rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.' The primitive Christians dwelt on the character and teaching of their Master, on the principles which He taught them, and the hopes with which He inspired them, in contrast with the character of the gods worshipped by the heathen, the views and practices prevalent among them, and

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the teachings of their sages. The contrast thus presented told powerfully on many minds. Down to our day Christian advocates have largely and rightly used this argument. At the present hour many are fortified in their faith by the utter failure of unbelievers, notwithstanding the great though unacknowledged help given them by the Bible, to substitute for the system they are so desirous to displace any positive truth, which will meet the cravings of the intellect, conscience, and heart.

Innumerable are the cases in our daily lives, in which we feel the force of contrast. We never realize the power of a great poet more than when we turn from his *chef d'œuvre* to the rhyming of a miserable poetaster. We get new insight into the merits of a great picture, when we see along side of it a wretched daub. Excellence never shines more brightly than when there is close to it the dark shadow of gross depravity. The works of God appear most glorious, when they are contrasted with the works of man. The argument on which we are entering, if rightly prosecuted, is one of no ordinary potency.

Living as we are in a country where Hindooism has prevailed for ages, and where the vast majority are still subject to its sway, it has special claims on our attention. The subject is large and difficult, though very interesting and instructive. Within the limits of an Essay it is impossible to do more than show the main features of the system, and mark their relation to the religion of the Bible.

Essentials, not
circum-
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looked at.

We beg to make here a preliminary remark we deem important. There is no more frequent and fruitful source of error than looking at outward and occasional agreement, and failing to observe essential difference. We must look below the surface, if we would arrive at the truth. We must judge men and things by their essential qualities, and not by their superficial appearances. Many a bad man does every now and then an honourable and praiseworthy act, but we judge his character not by occasional acts, but by the tenor of his life. We may have difficulty in understanding single acts in the life of a good man, but we look so far as we can at his entire bearing, and estimate him accordingly. Thus it ought to be with sys-

tems. We ought, so far as it is in our power, to get at their heart, to ponder their principles, to observe how these are applied, and thus rise above superficial and occasional statements, which tend only to deceive us, because in many an instance they have no connexion with the system at all, or are directly opposed to its spirit.

For instance, Hindooism is frequently represented thus, 'This is the religion of a people in a state of semi-civilization. In both its legends and practices there is much that is offensive to our taste, which will be certainly outgrown, when the people rise to our level. In the mean time we should leave them to hold on their own way. They have every thing essential in religion. They believe in God as well as we do, although they worship Him in a different fashion. Their religion, like ours, condemns lying, stealing, drunkenness, and other sins. They believe that the wicked will be punished, and the righteous rewarded in another state. They believe in miracles, but according to their taste their miracles are much more marvellous than ours. They hold the doctrine of a Trinity in the Godhead. They receive with us the doctrine of the Incarnation, though after their manner they have ten Incarnations, while we have only One. Why then should we disturb them? They have a religion with true elements in it, and our heavenly Father will pardon their unavoidable mistakes.'

Superficial agreement.

In this representation there is a show of truth, but the reality of error. Both in the language of the people, and in their sacred books, there is a good deal to countenance the views thus ascribed to them, and yet it is inconceivable any one can take the trouble of studying one of their standard books, and marking well the tenor of their conversation, without coming to the conclusion, that on all the subjects named, God, man, the relation of man to God, sin, retribution, and a future state, their views are diametrically opposed to ours, so much so, that if we be right they are certainly wrong, and if they be right we are certainly wrong. There is a superficial agreement, while there is an essential and irreconcilable difference.

Essential difference.

When Christians are asked 'What is the standard of your religion? In what book or books is it most purely and fully taught?' they are ready with the reply, 'The Scriptures of

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the Old and New Testament. We receive what they approve and teach. We reject what they condemn.' When we ask the Hindoos what their standard is, we have a ready reply, even the most illiterate have it on their lips, 'The four Vedas, the six Shastras, and the eighteen Puránas.' This is an abbreviated form of the Hindoo Canon, for besides the books mentioned it includes Upvedas, Upangs, Upa-puranas, and many other writings, treating almost every subject which can interest the human mind. The Hindoos have besides two great Epic poems, which though not named as forming a part of the Canon, are deemed inspired, and have a higher place in the estimation of the people generally, are better known by them, and have a more powerful influence over them, than any other books. These poems are the Mahabhárut and the Rámáyan, both very extensive, the former especially, with its 200,000 lines, occupying when printed four Quarto volumes, and thus as to size taking the first place among the poems of the world.

The Vedas, not only in antiquity but in authority, hold by far the highest place. Professor Max Muller says, "The highest authority for the religion of the Brahmins is the Veda. All other works—the laws of Manu, the six orthodox systems of Philosophy, the Puránas, or the legendary systems of India—all derive their authority from their agreement with the Veda. The Veda alone is called Sruti, or revelation; every thing else, however sacred, can only claim the title of Smirti, or tradition."

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Some find the Bible too large, and though they have it by them all their days in their own language, never become tolerably acquainted with it. Those who know it best, and study it most, become so familiar with its letter, that they can scarcely find any thing new in its words, but they continually find something new and fresh in the thoughts it suggests, and the feelings it excites. What are we to say to the Hindoo Canon, composed of so vast a multitude of books, all written in the Sanserit language, the language of the learned, and with the exception of a small portion, lying buried in that language? How is such a literature to be estimated? In order to its being estimated, it must be known, and how is it to be known? A

most distinguished Sanscrit scholar tells us, what we might have expected to hear, that no Pundit, however able and learned, has ever traversed, or can traverse this vast field. We once heard a Pundit, after speaking with contempt of that puny book, the Bible, call his own literature 'An ocean without a bottom, and without a shore,' and such an ocean can be neither fathomed nor explored. Pandits, as a class, keep themselves to one book, or books of the same order, and their knowledge of books outside their favourite circle is very limited.

We are not however left in such ignorance of this literature as to be disqualified for forming an opinion regarding it. There is not a single department of this vast territory, into which Sanscrit scholars have not more or less penetrated, and they have told us enough, if we read and ponder their revelations, to give us a firm foothold, from which we can express an opinion of the character and contents of the sacred writings of the Hindoos. We must judge the unknown by the known, and we can do this with the greater confidence, as every successive advance into the field only confirms the impression made by the survey of its border. There may be a right estimate of the character and drift of a literature, when there is no fitness to discuss its niceties and details.

The Hindoo literature partially known.

So far as these writings are to be considered a Canon for a religion, their bulk is an insuperable disadvantage, even if they were in the language of the people, and possessed a homogeneous character. Composed as they have been in a language utterly unknown to the people generally, and made up as they are of the most heterogeneous elements, they can be neither a Directory nor a Standard. We have abundant reason to be thankful, when we turn from them to our little Bible.

The disadvantages of so large a Canon.

Christian advocates adduce strong external evidence in support of the assertion that the Bible contains the record of a supernatural revelation. They maintain, and the position has never been successfully assailed, that the New Testament is composed of books, which have come down to us from the persons, to whom their authorship is ascribed, and relate facts, which are the more confirmed the more they are tested. For the historical accuracy of the facts related in the Old Testament a variety of arguments is produced, with which any one may become

The historical basis of the Bible.

acquainted, who gives his attention to the subject. In vain we look, as we now proceed to show, for any similar evidence in favour of the sacred writings of the Hindoos.

The un-
historical
character
of the
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writings.

The Pundits with all their learning, subtlety, and diligence, have been utterly wanting in the historical faculty. It has been said that in their vast literature not a page of pure history can be found. It is allowed that many incidents are mentioned, and many statements made, from which historical inferences can be safely drawn, but it is affirmed that the historical element is invariably mingled with legend. This may be an exaggerated statement, but it may be confidently said that no treatise, however small, has come down to us, which deserves to be designated as historical. This being the case, there is no basis on which an historical argument in favour of the Hindoo writings can be raised. So convinced of this are the Pundits, that notwithstanding their intellectual adroitness, they have not, so far as we are aware, ever ventured on an argument in favour of their sacred writings, similar to the argument from external evidence, on which Christian advocates have so largely dwelt. They are eager to plunge into questions the solution of which will ever baffle the human mind, but as to the historical argument they leave us to walk the course, and satisfy themselves with looking down on us with contempt, for attaching importance to such common place affairs.

The Vedas

Look at the Vedas, the most ancient and venerable of Hindoo books. We are told they have come from the mouth of Brahmá. As if this were not sufficient honour we are told they have had no origin—that they are eternal! Writings with such an origin, or having no origin at all, are certainly unsusceptible of historical proof.

of human
origin.

* These high pretensions are not confirmed by the perusal of the Vedas. They soon betray their mundane origin. They have the names of Rishees, holy men, attached to them in a way which suggests that these are the authors, and they abound with references to events which had transpired. These writings, at least their most ancient portion, contain the hymns, with which the Aryan race, during their early settlement in India, worshipped their gods, deprecated their wrath, and importuned

their favour. It is certain that these songs were not reduced to writing for a long period after their composition. When they were first composed, and when they found written expression, it is impossible to say, the most distinguished and careful scholars telling us that certainty is unattainable, and conjecturally assigning them to periods separated from each other by several centuries. Some place them at so remote a period as the 16th century before Christ, others declare for the 10th or 9th century, while the 7th century B. C. has not been without its advocates.

The genuineness of the earliest portion of these writings is maintained by scholars, whom we have every reason to trust and follow. In style, in language, in the state of society they indicate, in the worship they prescribe, in the tenets they assert, in the illustrations they use, and in the legends they contain, they have the sure marks of a very remote past. They thus possess a peculiar interest for all who wish to become acquainted with the early history of one of the foremost races of mankind; and the scholars, who have laboured on them for years, have done excellent service. While acknowledging their substantial genuineness, and attaching a high value to them, as a vivid picture of the social and religious condition of the early Hindoos, we are not aware of a single historical proof advanced in favour of their Divine origin. We read of no miracles, which have been historically attested. We find no prophecies, which have been historically fulfilled. We meet with no collateral evidence of any kind. We can understand the mundane affairs mentioned, without supposing any supernatural interposition, and the supra-mundane affairs, in which the gods play their part, belong to a sphere, where historical proof has no footing.

The Philosophical writings, called the Shástras, are very ancient but every attempt even to approximate the time of their composition has been unsuccessful. We are sure they are of much later date than the Vedas.

The Mahábhárat and the Rámáyan, the great Epic poems, though ancient belong to a much more recent period. The main personages described, and the main events related, have no doubt an historical basis, but they are so arrayed in the

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tain date.

colours of a lively and not infrequently fantastic imagination, that it would be as reasonable to seek for historical delineation in the scenes depicted by Milton in his *Paradise Lost*, and *Paradise Regained*, as in the scenes of the Hindoo Epics. Viewed as poems they have great merits, perhaps greater than with our western training we can appreciate, but as authoritative religious records they are utterly destitute of historical support.

The same statement with still greater emphasis may be made about the Purānas, which govern the views and practices of the modern Hindoos. The Vishnu Purāna, which is said to be the most complete of the whole, has been translated and largely annotated by Dr. H. H. Wilson, and is prefaced by a most valuable Introduction, giving an amount of information about the Purānas such as is not we suppose to be found elsewhere. The work is large and hard to read, but it ought to be carefully perused by every one, who would know, what modern Hindooism is. Like most of the Purānas it draws its materials largely from that store house of Hindoo lore, the *Māhābhārat*. One cannot enter the book without perceiving that it deals with matters entirely outside the pale of history, and the impression is deepened as the reader advances.

Their un-
historical
character, Apart from the unhistorical character of their contents, the proof is abundant that the Purānas are utterly destitute of historical authority. On this point we cannot do better than hear what Dr. H. H. Wilson has to say. "The Purānas as they are now must be very different from what they were in the century preceeding the Christian era, for Amara Sinh the Lexicographer represents them as having five characteristic topics, which they certainly have not now. Each of the Purānas specifies the names of the whole eighteen. The list could not have been complete, while the work that gives it was unfinished, and in one only therefore, the last of the series, have we a right to look for it. * * Some of the Purānas particularize the number of stanzas, which each of the eighteen contains—400,000 slokas, or 1,600,000 lines. In one or two instances they disagree, but in general they concur. These are fabled to be an abridgement, the whole amount being a krur, or ten millions. * * In the *Brahmā Purāna*, which is called *ādi*, or first, there is distinct reference to the temples of *Jagannāth*

in Orissa, which shows that it could not be earlier than the 13th or 14th century. * * In the last chapter of the Padmá (Lotus) Purána there is a dialogue, in which it is stated that Vishnu is the only one of the triad entitled to respect, Siva being licentious, Brahmá arrogant, and Vishnu alone pure. No portion of the Padmá Purána is older than the 12th century, and the last parts may be as recent as the 15th or 16th of our era." Here is another brief but comprehensive statement about the Puránas. "The Puránas profess to contain the original records of the Hindoos, but though they may contain legends of a very ancient character, and these principally taken from the Mahábhárat, they contain incontrovertible proofs—by their allusion to temples, the date of the erection of which is known; by their notice and support of sects, the rise and progress of which are understood; by their warnings as to the presence of Mussalmans in India; by their quotations from one another and other circumstances—that their composition is quite modern. The oldest is not anterior to the 8th or 9th century after Christ, and the most recent of them are not above three or four centuries old." We are informed that the manuscripts of the Puránas differ hopelessly from each other.

The recent date of the Puránas furnishes us with an explanation of the resemblance which has been noted between some passages in the life of Christ and in that of Krishna. When we think of the dispersion of the Nestorian Christians in the far East, there is nothing improbable in the supposition that a portion of the Gospel narrative had reached the Pundits. Would that they had turned it to better account !

Their recent date.

Krishna Dwaipáyan, commonly called Veda Vyás, is the Coryphæus of Hindoo literature. Vyás means 'compiler,' and we are told there have been twenty-eight Vyáses during the vast periods named in the Puránas, and all these have been incarnations of Vishnu or Brahmá. Krishna Dwaipáyan was the last and most celebrated. He is said to have compiled the Vedas, written the Mahábhárat, composed some of the Puránas, and compiled the rest. It is calculated that if he did all the work attributed to him, he must have lived at least fifteen hundred years. It is strange that pure Brahminical lineage

Veda Vyás.

is not ascribed to him, his father having been a Brahman, but his mother a fisherman's daughter. Several of the *Rishees*, whose names are prefixed to the Vedic hymns, were not Brahmans, from which it is evident that Brahmanhood had not then assumed its hereditary and rigid form.

We are not aware that a single Sanscrit scholar, either in Germany or in England, would question the substantial accuracy of these statements. Those who would put the Bible on the same historical, rather unhistorical, level with these Hindoo books, are acting a very unworthy part, for they are shutting their eyes to obvious facts.

The doctrines and rites of Hindooism.

We now proceed to consider the *doctrines* inculcated, and the *rites* prescribed by the sacred writings of the Hindoos, and as we proceed we shall see how great a contrast they present to the teaching of the Bible. Ancient Hindooism, the Hindooism of the Vedas, differs so widely from modern Hindooism, the Hindooism of the Puránas, not only in rites, but in principle, that they must be treated separately. There have been many changes in the religious views and practices of the people during their long career in India, but in giving, as we are now doing, a brief and rapid sketch of their religious system, it is enough to attend to its earlier and later forms. We can say nothing in this Essay about the great episode of Buddhism, which for a time achieved a great victory over Brahmanism, but which was at last driven from the field.

The worship of the Vedic age.

The worship of the Vedic age was thoroughly naturalistic. The great objects of nature and the principal elements, the sun, the moon, fire, wind, and water, were turned into deities, and received adoration. These were invested with personal qualities, and as might be expected the qualities were those of the worshippers, combined with a power and greatness vastly transcending any thing which man possesses. In the Vedic hymns the gods are extolled for their power, their wisdom, their kindness, and in some instances for their personal beauty. Their favour is implored, and their wrath is deprecated. They are approached with sacrifices and offerings, and their presence is invoked at the sacrificial feasts. Most minute instructions are given as to the services with which they are most pleased, and the rites with which they can be best propitiated.

It is most likely that at the commencement this worship was simply symbolic, the most impressive of natural objects, and the most useful of elements, being chosen as the fittest representatives of God's power, greatness, and goodness. History tells us the goal at which this symbolic worship speedily arrives. When the mind is fixed on the symbols, and invests them with personal qualities, addressing them from day to day as possessed of these qualities, and in order to realizing them the better, making the personality the more intense by attributing to them a great variety of actions, the whole sphere of the mental vision is filled, and God disappears from the view. He is displaced by His own symbols. For Him there is no adoration, no love, no service.

There is every reason to believe that thus it was with the Hindoos of the Vedic era. The question has been discussed, Do they deserve the name of Monotheists? Did they recognize one living God as above nature, above sun and moon, fire and ether, having an entirely separate existence, but upholding all, ruling all, and subordinating all to the accomplishment of His purposes? Or when they speak of God as distinct from their deities, have they a Pantheistic meaning, regarding Him as the essence of which the universe is the development—as the whole of which the various objects in the universe are parts? Passages in favour of either view have been advanced, and the question is one which does not admit of easy settlement. Dr. Wilson in guarded terms speaks of the Vedic system as Monotheistic. He says, "Apparently the most ancient parts of the Hindoo ritual recognized an active ruler in the Creator of the universe, the notion of abstract deity originating with the schools of philosophy." Colebrooke represents the Vedic system as Pantheistic. "The real doctrine of the Indian scripture is the unity of the deity, in whom the universe is comprehended; and the seeming polytheism which it exhibits offers the elements and the stars and planets as God." This uncertainty clearly proves, that the teaching of the Vedas on the highest of subjects is very unsatisfactory. One cannot open the Bible without perceiving its unvarying and decisive testimony to the One Living and True God. It would appear a person may spend years on the Vedas, and be left in doubt.

Do the
Vedas
teach monotheism?

Whatever opinion may be held on this point, one thing is evident, that the deities adored and served so filled the minds of these Vedic worshippers, that practically no place was left for the service of the Most High.

Bible
teaching
about na-
ture.

The teaching of the Bible is diametrically different. It refers continually to the great objects of nature as created by God, as upheld and ruled by Him, as manifesting His glory, and intended to promote man's welfare. Which is the preferable representation, the representation most consonant to reason, most worthy of God, and most fitted to nurture a healthy piety—that which sets forth God as the Maker, the Sustainer, and the Ruler of all, or that which turns natural objects and laws into gods, gives them a separate personal existence, ascribes to them such qualities as man possesses, with power superadded, and shows them at frequent strife and enmity with each other? The question, thus put, we leave with all confidence to the answer of every unprejudiced mind.

The Vedic
people
were dif-
ferent
from mo-
dern Hin-
doos.

These ancient Hindoos were extremely different from their modern descendants and in several respects the difference is greatly in their favour. If those only are idolaters, who bow down before images, these were not, for they had neither temples nor images. If those be idolaters, who worship the creature more than the Creator, they can not be acquitted of the charge. It would appear that caste was then entirely different from what it has since become, being the designation of a profession, rather than the title of a hereditary class. The gods of the modern Hindoos seem to have been unknown. Rudra is indeed named, but this is one of the names of Indra, the Jupiter Tonans of those times, and it would require even more than Pundit ingenuity to identify him with Shiva or Mahadeo, to whom the name Rudra is now applied. There is mention of one Krishna, a demon on the banks of the Jumna, whom Indra slew. When we remember the famous contest between Indra and Krishna, caused by the abandonment of Indra's worship by the shepherds of Brindában at Krishna's instigation, during which Krishna kept for seven days and seven nights the mountain Gobardhan, like an umbrella, over the heads of his followers, to protect them from Indra's thunder bolts, we naturally sup-

pose that in the Vedic reference we have the view of the ancient Hindoos regarding him. This may be a mistaken inference, and if so it would appear the Vedic people knew nothing about Krishna. The writings attached to the Vedas in which the gods now worshipped by the Hindoos are named, are declared by the most eminent scholars to be of comparatively modern date. The cow had no such place as it has now in Hindoo esteem. It was deemed sufficiently sacred to be deemed fit for sacrifice, and its flesh, thus consecrated, was deemed excellent food. These old Aryans seem to have been a lively, brave, roystering people, quaffing their Soma juice with as much relish as their Aryan cousins took up their mighty goblets in the north-west of Europe, and enjoying their feasts of beef, and other animal food, as keenly as any carnivorous human beings have ever done. It has been often said that if these ancient Hindoos were to re-appear on the stage, and to act before their descendants their former life, they would be regarded with horror as a most impure and irreligious people.

One marked and fatal defect in the ancient Hindoos was their excessive worldliness. One searches their records in vain for a high toned morality, and for spiritual aspirations. The character given to their gods is that which would be given by a low-toned people. Deliverance from disease, the increase of herds, abundance to eat and drink, victory over enemies, the destruction of enemies—these are the things, which form the burden of their prayers. Confession of sin, prayer for deliverance from sin, and longing for holiness are certainly foreign to the spirit of the Vedic writings, though a very few passages have been produced, in which they seem to be recognized. Sin is not infrequently mentioned, but it is the sin of those who had injured them, and which they pray may be punished. The contrast in this respect between the early portion of the Bible, and the Vedas, is most striking and instructive. How early in the Bible is God set forth as a righteous holy God, who demands holiness from his worshippers! We travel wearily through the Vedas in search of such teaching, and we find it not.

A great
moral de-
fect,

The modern Hindoos have departed widely from the ways

The same defect in modern Hindoos. of their fathers, but to their deep injury they have clung closely to their spirit. The intellect and imagination have been cultivated and even strained, in a degree, to which we believe no other nation can afford a parallel, but the conscience, the highest part of our nature, the source within us of the most important knowledge, has been sadly neglected, and the neglect has told with fatal effect on the works of Philosophers, Sages, and Poets. To this neglect, and to the consequent perversion of moral sentiment, we have mainly to trace the withering Pantheism, the gross and grotesque Polytheism, and the degrading idolatry, which have for ages characterized the Hindoo race. If the Vedic people had been high-toned, and had given a moral impulse to their descendants, and if that impulse had been sustained, what a gem among the nations, considering their capabilities and advantages, would the Hindoo race have become!

The Hindooism of the Purāṇas.

It is time for us to consider modern Hindooism, the Hindooism of the Purāṇas. This differs from ancient Hindooism in the hero-worship, which forms its most prominent feature, and which has thrown completely into the back ground, though it has not entirely displaced, the deification of nature—in the multitudinous stories it tells about those heroes, who occupied on earth a position analogous to that of the sun and moon in the heavens—in its temples and images—in its rigid caste—in its new rites and pilgrimages—in the great prominence given to the transmigration of souls—and perhaps most markedly of all in the pronounced Pantheism, largely derived from the philosophic writings, which pervades, we might say, saturates the Purāṇic writings.

Let us state, so far as we can, the main features of modern Hindooism.

Outline of Purāṇic Hindooism.

The Supreme, Adwait, the One without a second, is not a person, but a thing, (*vastu*), a vast, unconscious latent power, passive intelligence, with immense capabilities, but no actuality. In some mysterious way the Supreme comes to consciousness, and says 'I am One, I shall be many.' Three qualities stir within Him, and these qualities give birth to the universe. These qualities coming directly from the Supreme, form and mould all beings and all things in the heavens,

on the earth, and in the lower regions—gods, sages, men, demons, hobgoblins, fire, air, water, stones—in short every thing which the universe contains. These are all such as they came from the Supreme.

The relation of the universe to God is not that of the creation to the Creator, but of a stream to a fountain, of the rays of the sun to the sun, of parts to a whole. Emanation not creation is the true principle of the universe. God is at once its material and efficient cause. He is the agent, the act, and the effect.

There has been no fall, and there can be therefore no restoration. Man however finds himself unhappy. What is the cause? The cause is his ignorant supposition that he exists, while in fact only God exists. The evil from which he suffers is not sin but self-consciousness.

What then is the end man ought to pursue? 'Liberation,' in other words deliverance from the error of believing in personal existence, and ability to say, 'I am Brahm.' One other step must be taken. The 'I' must be entirely banished; and the work is done. He is re-absorbed in the Supreme, from whom he was an emanation, and is entirely rid of conscious existence.

How is the great end to be secured? The most direct road is by knowledge and meditation. Let the devotee abandon his position in the world, break away from relative ties, become entirely indifferent to earthly beings and things, have recourse to the desert, lead there a life of austerity and meditation, and if the rules prescribed by the Sages be implicitly obeyed, liberation will be gained. This is the straight road to deliverance, but as there are many, who are neither able nor willing to tread this high path, to them the circuitous road is open of faith, rites, and good works. Let them serve the gods, perform rites, go on pilgrimages, revere and feed the Brahmans, give alms to the poor and miserable, and assuredly they will have their reward. In their next birth they will rise to a higher position. If low-caste now, they may be born the next time in the family of a Brahman, it may be in their next birth they will be gods. They will be thus nearer the coveted liberation. If however they act an irreligious or

unworthy part, they are sure to descend in the scale of births. They will be born low-caste, a demon, a beast, or even be imprisoned in a stone or a clod. Escape from the misery of births, even from the birth of a god, is the aim of the truly wise man.

There is however only a quicker and a slower arrival at the goal. After a vast period all beings and all things, gods, demons, animals, and inanimate things, will be absorbed into Brahm, who will betake Himself to a profound slumber on the head of the serpent Sesha, till the awakening again come, when again He must bear the burden of conscious existence, times of activity and repose alternating for ever.

Such is Hindooism, so far as we have been able to comprehend it. Both in its speculative and practical forms, there are marked diversities, but we do not think any thoughtful Hindoo will object to the fairness of our statement. There is not a word in it, for which high authority cannot be produced. It may however be well to give a more detailed statement for illustration and confirmation.

The Sān-
khya Phi-
losophy.

According to the Sāṅkhya philosophy, which is deemed by some the most ancient, the universe has been developed from Prakrit, Nature, a plastic principle, described by Kapila, the founder of the system, as 'eternal, universal, immutable, single, independent, free from qualities, simple and sovereign.' From this Prakrit Kapila educes all beings and all things, mingling mental and material qualities in a way very singular to a western mind. He does not say there is no God, but he thinks the universe can be accounted for without Him, and if He exist, He is entirely beyond our discovery. Kapila thus acts very much on the principle of our modern Positivists. His system has been pronounced Atheistic, and to supply what was deemed its great defect, the Joga school of Patanjali arose, which insists on God as the source of all. Both schools however agree in emanation, the transmigration of souls, and final-absorption.

The Vē-
dantin
Philoso-
phy.

The Vedantin philosophy is so all predominant in India, that it may be said to have swallowed up every other system. It has struck its roots deep into the books, the spirit, and the character of the people. It too maintains the doctrines of

emanation and absorption, but it does so in a somewhat different fashion. To our apprehension, the world with its vast variety of objects and we ourselves exist, but if we could only escape from our ignorance, we should find our apprehension to be a mistake. God only exists. Properly speaking God is not a person. He is the Existent-Joy-Thought, but we must not think of Him as either thinking or joyful. This conscious existence of ours is a mere dream, and the sooner we get rid of it the better. We mistake the rope for the serpent, the mother-o'-pearl for silver, the reflection of the sun on the water for the sun. *Máyá*, the power of God which upholds all, is in the Vedantin sense, and in the sense of common speech, an illusion which has come forth from the Supreme, and has led all astray. If these views be correct it is difficult for us to form any conception of either God or the universe. We know the difference between our consciousness, when awake, and our dreaming when asleep. Each state has its marked peculiarities. But if our wakeful consciousness be only a dream, we are utterly unable to conceive what reality is.

We must not omit to mention the *Nyáya* system of Philosophy for which high claims have been advanced. It deals more with Logic than with Philosophy, but so far as it deals with Philosophy it seems, on some points, favourably distinguished from other systems. We cannot do better than transcribe the words of Dr. Murray Mitchell. "The *Nyáya* has been mentioned as the least objectionable system of Hindoo Philosophy. It is not clear whether the more ancient form of the *Nyáya* was Theistic. The later form admits the personality of the Deity, and ascribes to Him intelligence, will, and active power. Still even the *Nyáya* is grievously defective. It says nothing whatever of the moral attributes of God, nor of His government, nor of creation. But a Deity without moral attributes and government of the world, is a Deity only in name. The chief end of man, according to the *Nyáya*, is final deliverance from pain; and this is to be attained by the cessation of all action, whether good or bad."

The *Nyáya* Philosophy.

We have thus glanced at the systems of Philosophy that we may the better understand the Pantheism, which is so marked a characteristic of the Puranic system. *

The Bhagawad Gítá. After the Vedas which are constantly lauded to the skies, but are extremely little known,* except by a very small band of Pundits, and they know them to a very limited extent, perhaps no book stands higher in Hindoo estimation than the Bhagawad Gítá. It has been translated into the principal Vernaculars of India, and is spoken of by native readers in terms of the loftiest praise. It has had the honour of translation into several European languages, and European scholars have joined in its eulogy, one saying that it teaches an "almost Christian morality," while Warren Hastings went so far as to say, "It contains a theology accurately corresponding with that of the Christian dispensation, and powerfully illustrating its fundamental doctrines." It would have fared ill with India if W. H. had not been a better statesman than theologian!

The Bhagawad forms an episode in the Mahábharat, but it was evidently written long after the greater part of that work was produced. It is intended to reconcile the Hindoo devotee to the active discharge of the duties of his caste and station, even when required to slay his relatives. It asserts the worthlessness of mere outward rites, has a quasi-spiritual tone, inculcates a temperate and benevolent life, and notwithstanding the marked presence, in several passages, of Brahminical pride, narrowness, and superstition, it breathes a kindly spirit, but it is throughout intensely pantheistic, gives prominence to the three qualities, as*accounting for the varieties of character, dwells on the transmigration of souls, and insists in every

* How little these are known by Pundits, and how exclusively indebted we are to European scholars for the knowledge of them now accessible, Professor Max Muller tells us. "There was no commandment of the Old Testament which, according to the Brahmins, might not be matched in the Veda. There was no doctrine of Christianity, which had not been anticipated in the Veda. If the Missionaries were incredulous and called for the manuscripts, they were told that so sacred a book could not be exposed to the profane looks of unbelievers, and there was an end to all further argument. * * * The directors of the East India Company, always ready to assist the Missionaries by any legitimate means, invited the Pundits through the Asiatic Society at Calcutta, to undertake the work, and to publish a complete and authentic edition of their own sacred writings. The answers received only proved what was known before, that in the whole of Bengal there was not a single Brahman, who could edit the Veda. In spite of all these obstacles, however, the Veda is now being published in this country under the patronage of the East India Company."

chapter on 'liberation,' absorption into the Deity, as the one thing on which the wise man is bent. The better teaching of the book is overborne by its leading principles, which are utterly inconsistent with a really noble and excellent character.

We have more than once mentioned the three qualities—*The three qualities.* 'guns,' fetters, as they are called. These have a very prominent place in the philosophy, the mythology, and the opinions of the people. They are Sattwas—Truth, including goodness, happiness, complacency, &c.—Rajas—Passion, including affection, energy, pain, &c., and Tamas—Darkness, including revenge, stolidity, indifference, &c. These are, as we have already observed, the properties of the Supreme, when He comes to consciousness, and they pervade the universe. According to a high authority one is never unaccompanied by the other two, but in every object one has the predominance. Truth, goodness, prevails in the gods, passion, energy, with the necessary attendant pain, has most power over man, while the demons are given over to darkness. This too, as indifference, stolidity, is the quality of inanimate things. The three qualities explain the actings of the Hindoo Trinity, Brahmá being under the power of passion, Vishnu of truth, and Siva of darkness. The Puráṇas are fiercely antagonistic, one lauding Vishnu, another Siva, while another depreciates both, and maintains the superiority of Durgá. This convenient doctrine of the three qualities turns the antagonism into harmony. The Vishnuite Puráṇas are pervaded by the principle of goodness, the Sivaite by that of darkness, and those which dwell most on the stories of Brahmá, as well as those which lean to the Sakti or female principle are pervaded by passion. This is the explanation furnished by some of the Puráṇas themselves.

Let us quote in an abridged form a few passages from the Vishnu Puráṇa in illustration of Puráṇic Pantheism.

The quality of darkness pervaded Brahmá, and the demons were first born, issuing from his thigh, the quality of goodness pervaded him, and the gods came from his mouth, the quality of passion pervaded him, and the progenitors of mankind appeared. ——— Prahláda, the son of a demon king, who had become a devotee of Vishnu, is reckoned a very great saint. We are told that he looked on the world with mind undisturbed,

Puráṇic
Panthe-
ism.

and full of benignity, regarded all things with equal affection, and as identical with himself. Meditating upon Vishnu as identical with his own spirit, Prahláda became as one with him, and finally regarded himself as the divinity: he forgot entirely his own individuality, and was conscious of nothing else than his being^a the inexhaustible, eternal, supreme soul; and in consequence of the efficacy of this conviction of identity, the imperishable Vishnu, whose essence is wisdom, became present in his heart, which was wholly purified from sin. He is represented as addressing Vishnu, 'Thou art knowledge and ignorance, truth and falsehood, poison and ambrosia.'

A scene in
Vishnu's
heaven.

We must venture on giving one scene of Vishnu's heaven, as illustrating at once the style and spirit of the Puránas. We are sorry there is a lady in the case, for it will be deemed a confirmation of the uncharitable opinion, that wherever mischief is concerned a woman is at the bottom of it, as if man of himself were not capable of any amount of mischief!

The demon Narak was a terrible persecutor of the gods. He carried off saints, gods, &c, and shut them up in prison—took the umbrella of Varuná unpermeable to water, the jewel mountain crest of Mandar, the celestial nectar-dropping earrings of Aditi the mother of Indra, and demanded his elephant. Indra came to crave Krishna's assistance. (Narak was a son of the earthly Vishnu.) Krishna killed on this occasion the seven thousand sons of Muru like moths, with the flame of the edge of his discus. Krishna went afterwards to the heaven of the gods to restore the earrings of Aditi. He was accompanied by Satyabhámá one of his wives, and rode on his bird-vehicle Garud. The gods met him at the gates of heaven, bearing respectful offerings. Aditi thus praised him, 'Thou art gods, Yakshas, daityas, rakshases, pisaches, (different classes of demons and infernal beings) gandharbas, (heavenly songsters) men, animals, deer, elephants, reptiles, trees, shrubs, creepers, climbers, and grasses; all things large, middling, small, immense, or minute: thou art all bodies whatsoever, composed of aggregated atoms.' When traversing swarg (heaven) with Indra Krishna saw the Párijátá tree produced at the churning of the ocean: bark of gold, fruit stalks bearing numerous clusters of fragrant fruit. Satyabhámá saw the tree, coveted it,

and appealed to her husband's affection to have it removed to Diwáriká (his royal city). She said, 'I long to shine amidst my fellow-queens, wearing the flowers of this tree in the braids of my hair.' Krishna put it on Garud. The keepers remonstrated, because it belonged to the queen of Indra. Word was sent to Indra. He was very angry. The gods came out against Krishna armed with clubs, swords, maces, and darts. Indra wielded the thunderbolt. Krishna showered myriads of arrows upon his assailants. Garud diligently plied his beak, and wings and nails. Indra, and the other gods submitted, and praised Krishna in terms similar to those with which Aditi had first saluted him, ascribing to him among other things the 'illusion', on account of which they had thought themselves to possess a separate personal existence. The tree was removed to Diwáriká. The smell of the tree perfumed the earth for three furlongs, and an approach to it enabled one to recollect the events of a prior existence. Krishna kept all the women and treasures of Narak to himself, and married 16,000 damsels at one time.

We do not think our readers would thank us for more extracts from the Vishnu Purána. We have seen the form its Pantheism takes. Here is another statement of the Pantheistic doctrine, which is ascribed to the famous Veda-Vyás. "Hair and nails, which are insensible, grow from a sensible animal body. The sea is one and not other than its waters; yet waves, foam, spray, drops, froth, and other modifications of it differ from each other. Similar is the singleness and identity of Brahm as cause and effect. The same earth exhibits diamonds, rocks, crystals, and the same soil produces a diversity of plants. As milk changes into curd, and water to ice, so is Brahm variously transformed and diversified." A very favourite illustration, accordant with the illustrations just given, is that of the spider, making its web out of its own body, and drawing it in again.

Panthe-
ism as ex-
pounded
by Veda-
Vyás.

There are men now in Europe who would feel entirely at home with these old Pandits. Here is a short extract from a book just published in England by a writer who bears an old Scotch name. "The sea wave dashed on rocks and sands, breaks and seems to die, but its motion-life is not lost, but changed into

English
Panthe-
ism.

heat, a life as noble and free as the motion-life enjoyed in the wave. Here at least is a distincter analogy, a truer-basis for hope, than Paul's dead grain of corn."

Polythe-
ism com-
bined
with Pan-
theism.

Polytheism is everywhere combined with Pantheism in the sacred books of the modern Hindoos. We are often told there are 330 millions of gods. The Brahmins with all their diligence have not attempted to give their names, and we are not even informed how the census was taken. We have accounts to satiety of some of the principal gods, and the stories told are marvellous indeed. How men could sit down, and from day to day, and year to year, weave such astounding stories is a mystery beyond our power to solve. Missionaries are often charged with misrepresenting the religion and character of the Hindoos, but it is impossible for them to describe the gods and goddesses in hues so dark, as those in which they have been deliberately depicted by the Pundits. We dare not pollute our pages with passages we have read in books deemed most sacred, and with stories we have heard from the mouths of Brahmins. The Pundits had before them a clear canvas, on which they might depict their gods in entire accordance with their judgment and imagination, and when we look at the canvas they have filled up, what do we find?—caprice, folly, pride, and lust acting out their despicable parts. The gods are said indeed to be great, powerful, and happy, but they are represented as subject to the greatest vicissitudes. Again and again have their enemies, the demons, prevailed against them, and incarnations have been as necessary for their deliverance as for the deliverance of oppressed mankind. Even the curse of angry Sages has hurled them from their thrones.

It must be remembered that the gods are represented as possessed of the quality of truth or goodness in a supernatural degree, while men are under the power of passion, and demons of darkness, but it is hard to choose between these beings, passion and darkness having got such dominion over them all. One would almost like to take up his abode in the hells of the demons, as soon as in the heavens of the gods, if these representations be accepted. As the life of the gods was the highest conception of conscious existence, which the Pundits had formed, we need not wonder that they longed for absorption

into the Deity, in other words, so far as personality is concerned, annihilation, as far preferable. Job said, 'I would not live alway.' If I were a god in the Hindoo Pantheon I would not live alway, even on condition of alway remaining a god. Such a life would be an intolerable burden. *

It is clear from what has been said that the gods are not essentially different from men, or indeed from animals or even inanimate things. They are only portions of the Supreme, of which the entire universe is the development, and their sole advantage is that like sparks from a central fire they are brighter than other sparks. Gods, like men, are portions of the Supreme.

We need not dwell on the idolatry of the Hindoos. It is patent to all. Their rites, their images, their festivals, their pilgrimages are endless, and they are endlessly diversified, according to the race and caste of the worshipper. Great though the diversity be, Hindooism presents the same marked features throughout the whole of India, and has underlying it the same principles. The more thoughtful among the Hindoos, both educated and uneducated, maintain they are not idolaters, when bowing before images. They do not adore the wood and stone. They adore the Supreme, that pervades the universe, and whose presence by the law of mental association is suggested by these outward forms. Before concluding this Essay we shall have an opportunity of testing this plea. We shall at present only say that we cannot look around us without seeing the degrading effect of such worship. Hindoo idolatry.

The merit of rites is asserted in the Hindoo writings in the strongest terms. The doctrine of the *opus operatum* is put forth in the most extreme and extravagant form. The name of a god taken in sport, or even for a bad purpose, burns out sin as surely as fire burns a child, though he know nothing about it. Those who even at a distance of a hundred leagues exclaim Gungá, Gungá (Ganges, Ganges), atone for the sins committed during three previous lives. At certain seasons and constellations bathing in the Ganges is exceedingly meritorious. The act delivers the sinner, with three millions of his ancestors, from the punishment of hell, and the crimes of a thousand human births are atoned for. The demons on several occasions gained such an amount of merit by obedience to Vedic instruc- The merit of rites.

tions, and the endurance of austerities, that they successfully warred with their enemies the gods. The gods have been frequently thrown into consternation by the tidings of the demons' meritorious deeds, as they knew it forbode calamity to them. There was one incarnation of Vishnu for the purpose of stopping and marring the pious doings, which had so impious an object. Worldly ends, like those which drew forth the prayers of the ancient Hindoos, are continually mentioned as the motives which prompt their descendants to the performance of meritorious deeds. We read of a Brahman, who stung by the jibes cast at him because he was childless, retired to the western sea, where for twelve years he lived on iron-sand, and Mahadeo at last gave him the desired boon.

Rites as not performed from high motives. We must be careful when speaking of a literature so vast as that of the Hindoos not to make sweeping statements, but the writer of this Essay can truly say that when reading of the rites and austerities of the Hindoos, and hearing of them from Brahmans, as he has often done, he has not met with a solitary instance of these rites being performed, and these sufferings endured, from a sense of duty to God, from a contrite heart, under a deep well-nigh crushing view of sin, with a longing for deliverance from sin, and an intense desire for holiness.

The rationale of merit. For the rationale of the merit inseparably bound up with the observance of certain rites, with pilgrimages, privations, and sufferings, apart from all exercise of the understanding, conscience, and heart, we look in vain to Hindoo sources. May it not be found in the willingness of the worshipper to secure the ends he deems most important by deeds and endurance, which may involve effort and suffering, but do not require of him the sacrifice of a single sin, and in the readiness of the Priest to favour a notion, which will bring him honour and wealth, he being the great instructor in these rites, and his agency being indispensable in the performance of many of them? Strange to say, notwithstanding the merit of rites, all may be lost on account of circumstances over which there can be no control. For instance, it is disastrous to die during the decreasing half of the lunar month.

Animal sacrifices. Animal sacrifices form a prominent feature of both ancient and modern Hindooism. By these sacrifices, we have been

told, the gods are propitiated, their wrath averted, and their favour secured. The goddess Kallee, at whose altars numberless victims have been offered, is said to be delighted with blood. The true idea of sacrifice, the acknowledgment of sin as worthy of death, the escape of the sinner through the death of a sinless substitute, the satisfaction and manifestation of the Divine justice, through one glorious sacrifice, of which animal sacrifices are mere symbols, has been unknown to both Vedic and Puránic worshippers. We do find the element of propitiation, though in a very gross form, we see a glimpse of substitution, but we in vain seek for those views of God's justice, of man's deep demerit, and of God's love and wisdom in providing through sacrifice for man's salvation, which constitute the true sacrificial doctrine, and give it so commanding a power over the heart. In Hindoo books and conversation sacrifice is utterly disassociated from humility, contrition, and holiness.

We must press into brief paragraphs our remaining statement about the Hindoo writings and system.

It is evident on the face of the Hindoo Scriptures that they are not intended for mankind. They contain much about Brahmans, Chhatries, Vaíses, and Sudras, but there is no place for nations outside the Hindoo pale, except they be satisfied with the position of outcasts. We naturally expect a religion for the world from Him, who is the Creator and Governor of the world. An exclusive national religion cannot be accepted as a Divine religion. The Jews could at any time receive persons of other nations into their communion, and the avowed purpose of their national separation was, that the religion established among them might in its main principles become universal. What indication is there that Hindooism was intended for the world?

The Purá-
nas are
not for
mankind,

The Hindoo Scriptures are not even intended for the whole of the Hindoo race. Books of such vast extent, written in the language of the learned, can never be the heritage of the people. Some of the views they assert may be widely promulgated, some of the stories they contain may be widely spread, but the books must belong to a very limited privileged class, and even among them they must be divided.

not even
for all
Hindoo.

Partiality towards classes is a marked feature of the Puránas.

Partiality. This partiality is founded on an original essential difference between different grades. Instead of being told that God has made of one blood all the nations that dwell on the face of the earth, the ordinary Hindoo representation is that the Brahmans came from the mouth of Brahmá, Chhatrees from his arms, Vaises from his thighs, and Sudras from his feet. All sorts of beings have in some way come from him, but what is the exact position of the other nations of mankind towards the Hindoo race, is no where mentioned, so far as we are aware. To put all classes on the same level would be, according to Hindooism, to subvert the Divine arrangement. Hence not only are honour and reverence due to the higher castes, to the Brahmans especially, but in the event of offences being committed, punishment is to be graduated, not according to the offence but according to the rank of the offender. Low caste men are to be punished with severity, disrespect to Brahmans being deemed the most aggravated of crimes, while a Brahman even for a murder is not to be touched, and banishment is the greatest punishment to which he should be subjected. In the Puránas we are not allowed to lose sight of the proud supercilious Brahman, looking down on others, and in the Institutes of Manu, which are to the Hindoos, what the law of Moses was to the Jews, this pride finds expression in regulations, which our government with all its respect to the religion of the people, speedily swept away, as intolerably unjust.

Wild stories.

The Puránas, so far as they have been accessible, abound with stories so wild, so grotesque, so defiant of all probability, that even the Arabian Nights' tales are often tame beside them. We read of one woman bringing forth 60,000 pigmy sages, no bigger than the joint of the thumb, chaste, pious, resplendent as the sun. The demon women are represented as giving birth to trees, creeping plants, owls, cows, &c. Vishnu as Varáha, the boar, dived to the bottom of the ocean to bring up the earth, which a demon had carried away, and re-appeared as the Níla mountain, the frightened Munees, holy men, hiding themselves in his bristles! The churning of the ocean with a view to obtaining the *amrita*, or water of life, is described at great length. Mount Meru, or as others say mount Mandara, was cast into the ocean. Vishnu plunged in, and in the form of a

tortoise supported the mountain on his back. The serpent-king Vāsuki was coiled round it, and the gods, seizing his head, and the demons, his tail, twirled it round till the ocean was churned. The gods, when the work was over, cheated the poor demons of the promised reward, keeping the *amrita* and all the good things produced, for themselves.

Vastness is a prominent element in Purānic sublimity. Mount Meru is in the centre of the earth, is 600,000 miles high, 356,000 wide at the top, and its base is 128,000 miles in circumference. A day of Brahm extends to 4,300,000,000 years! One hundred years of such days constitute his life! A volume could be easily filled with such details, but our readers will think they have got enough, more than enough. How gladly would we exchange cart-loads of such fables for simple faithful delineation of human character, and details of human life, its joys and sorrows, its successes and failures, such as compose so large a portion of the Bible!

When we consider the staple of the Purānas, so far as they have been made known to us, need we wonder at the verdict pronounced by a scholar on the literature of which they form a prominent part? "Not a single page of pure historical matter, unmingled with monstrous and absurd fable is extant, or probably was ever written in it. It affords us no certain clue to the discovery of even the origin of the races who first adopted or spoke the Sanscrit language. It lowers the tone of the mind, destroys the moral sense, lays open to a thousand deceptions and aberrations, and it creates a taste which is incapable of relishing reality, or moral truth."

Verdict on
the Purā-
nas.

We must not however pass on without observing that the Purānas contain beautiful passages, though so far as we know them, these passages are few and far between. We must give ourselves and our readers the pleasure of presenting a specimen of some we have noted. "Prosperity descends upon modest worth, as water flows towards low land." "How can Vishnu abide in the hearts of men with malice and envy and other evil passions? The glowing heat of fire abides not in a cluster of the cooling rays of the moon." "As the young Sal tree by its beauty declares the excellence of the juices which it has imbibed from the earth, so when the Eternal has taken up His

Beautiful
passages.

abode in the bosom of any one, that man is lovely amidst the beings of this world." The strength of union is thus illustrated. "By stems of grass having attained unto the state of a rope, even mad elephants are bound."

Unscientific.

The Puránas enter boldly into scientific statements, and with what success may be inferred from their teaching that the earth is a plain 408,000,000 miles in extent, that the sun is very much nearer the earth than the moon, and much more to the same effect. Even the extent of India is grossly misstated, for it is said to be 27,000 miles.

Jogees,

Whole volumes are taken up with instructions to Jogees, devotees, and these are of the most mechanical kind, without even a tinge of true spirituality. The end is as unspiritual as the means, for it is ability to float on the air, to live without food, and without breathing—in short to maintain life in defiance of the ordinary conditions of life.

Minute instructions.

Things moral and indifferent are constantly put on the same footing. For instance those who rear cats, fowls, &c., and those who perform religious ceremonies for rustics will be thrown into one of the hells, as well as thieves and murderers.

The instructions as to eating, drinking, dressing, walking, journeying, sleeping, and a hundred other things are so minute, that if one had nothing else to do, it would be impossible to observe them all, and if one did nothing but attend to them, how miserably dwarfed and enfeebled would the mind be, which had given its energies to the observance of a multitude of petty rules, for which no good reason can be conceived!

We shall not proceed any further with our exposition of Hindooism. We have said nothing, which will be new to those who have studied the system, but among our readers there may be some, who have paid little attention to it, and whose knowledge we wish to increase, with a view to their own good, and the good of others.

The Hindoos are not monotheists.

From the statements made it is evident that Hindoos are not Monotheists, if by Monotheist we mean a person who believes in one God, above all, and controlling all, but entirely distinct from the universe. They are Pantheists and Polytheists. They believe the universe to be God, sometimes making God the soul of the universe, sometimes making the universe the develop-

ment of God, con-substantial with Him, or according to the most approved philosophic system, representing all as mere illusion. They believe in many gods, as with themselves portions of God, though the most distinguished portions. Their views of God are so different from ours, that to represent them as essentially the same is to minister to a very hurtful delusion.

This antagonism at the root of our respective beliefs is manifest through all their ramifications. That this may be clearly shown, let us, even at the risk of repetition, mark the contrast.

We believe in a Creator and in creation. For these the Hindoos substitute a fountain and a stream, a source and an emanation, a whole and its parts. We believe in a Supreme Ruler and subjects. Their system admits of no such relationship. We believe that man has fallen. They believe that man is in his original state. We believe that sin is the greatest of evils, and that deliverance from it is the greatest of benefits. They regard conscious existence to be the great evil, and deliverance from it to be the highest good. Sin is often named, but as properly speaking no being exists except God, it is difficult to conceive who can be the sinner except God Himself. Our aim as Christians is to attain spiritual excellence, but the proper aim of the Hindoo is to get rid of the quality of truth or goodness, as well as of the qualities of passion and of darkness, for otherwise he will be subjected to the misery of births, good deeds and bad being respectively rewarded by either rising or falling in the scale, and thus he will be kept back from the grand consummation—absorption into the Supreme. To attain our object we trust in Jesus Christ as our Saviour, rest our hope of acceptance with God on His propitiatory sacrifice, and seek the constant aid of His grace that we may lead a holy life, while the Hindoos worship their Gods, offer sacrifices, practise rites, go on pilgrimages, and perform good works, or forsake the world, and give themselves up to meditation. We as Christians are called to love our fellow-creatures as ourselves, and to regard with a special love those related to us, but Hindooism, while allowing a lower road to the crowd, who are immersed in worldly affairs, calls on nobler spirits to take the

high course of abnegation—to aim at entire indifference to all beings and things, to part with love and hatred, with desire and aversion, and to practise meditation, till they perceive no distinction between themselves and the Supreme. We aspire to an eternal holy happy existence in the love and service of God. Hindoos aspire to ‘liberation,’ or in other words to annihilation, so far as conscious existence is concerned. To us the universe is a glorious manifestation of the Most High, and human life a great reality, which we are bound to turn to the highest account, but Hindooism, in its most approved orthodox teaching, represents the universe as the creation of ignorance, and human life a dream, so that if ignorance were dispelled, and knowledge to prevail, this universe, to us so glorious with its wondrous objects, and life, so real and serious with its capabilities and duties, would be scattered like mist before the rising sun. It is hard to credit ignorance with such extraordinary achievements.

Which system is most worthy of God? When the systems are contrasted the question arises, Which system gives the most worthy views of God, of man, of man’s state, of man’s aims and prospects? Which system best accords with the teachings of our moral nature, with the deductions of our reason, and with the testimony of the world around us?

Ultimate facts—God’s being and nature. The ultimate fact with us as Christians is, that God is the ever-blessed One, self-existent, clothed with majesty, arrayed with every natural and moral excellence, and incapable of change. When we try to comprehend this fact, we speedily reach a point beyond which we cannot go, but we feel that this fact, in itself so marvellous, explains all other facts, is indeed demanded by other facts for their explanation, and furnishes a place of repose for our mental and moral nature.

The ultimate fact with the modern Hindoos is that God is *Sat, Chit, Anand*—the Existent-Joy-Thought, an essence ‘*bastu*’ but not a conscious being. What are we to make of this representation? Our personality is very mysterious, but we are conscious of it, we believe in it, we cannot but believe in it, and it prompts us to believe in the Divine personality. The notion of goodness, joy, and thought, apart from a good, joyful, and thinking being, is utterly inconceivable by us. Then this essence, declared to be without attributes, has become endowed

with attributes, or the universe could not have existed even in thought. The ultimate fact of the Hindoos is, if we may so speak, utterly unthinkable, and involves the further and insuperable difficulty of an Essence, without any conceivable agency from without, turning itself into a Being. When the two so called-ultimate facts are regarded together, we are under no temptation as Christians to abandon our position.

According to the Hindoo notion, as we have been observing, there is properly speaking no Creator and no creature. In the Bible doctrine of the universe having been created by the power and will of the living God, and of its being entirely distinct from Him, there is much we cannot understand, which the Scripture does not attempt to explain, but again we have a fact, which however mysterious explains other facts, and lays a foundation for a fervent and manly piety. The doctrine of creation has a special bearing on man's character. If I be a creature of God, and as such wholly dependent on Him, I have every motive for humility, reverence, love, and gratitude. If however I be a portion of God, if only ignorance prevent me from identifying myself with God, before whom have I to humble myself? whom have I to love and serve? I have no Father in heaven, to whom I can look up. I am myself Divine. I have no providence to depend on. I am myself a portion of the Lord of providence.

Creation
and eman-
nation,

Look again at the prevalence of moral evil. The entrance of sin into a world created and ruled by a wise, loving, and holy God, is the mystery of mysteries. Explain the fact as we may, the moral nature of man, except when utterly sophisticated, testifies to its reality and fearfulness. The advantage of the Bible explanation is, that it agrees with the testimony of our consciences, for if we were not made for righteousness, why should we have these upward desires, and be displeased with ourselves when they are thwarted, and if we have not fallen from our original righteousness, why should we have these downward tendencies? Receiving the Bible testimony, while there is much demanding our trust in God, even when we cannot comprehend His ways, we feel ourselves plied with the most powerful motives to hate sin, to contend with it, and to look up to God, that He may crown the struggle with

Moral evil.

victory. If however with the Hindoos I believe myself to have my original and proper constitution, if what appears to me to be evil is the necessary exercise of those qualities, which are in the Supreme Himself in His conscious state, and with which I am endowed, why should I be ashamed of any thing I do? Why should I deem myself a sinner, or contend with what is called sin? What has our moral nature to say on this subject? If we do not suppress it, or extort from it a false testimony, does it not cry out against a notion, which casts down the barrier between sin and holiness, and would allow sin to pursue its course unchecked, under the plea that it is the acting out of a Divine attribute?

The primary feelings of our nature. Again, the Bible gives full scope to all the primary feelings of our nature, and places them all under the sanction of the Divine approval, condemning only the sinfulness which in our present state so often attaches to them. We have seen that the highest piety according to Hindooism demands the suppression of these feelings altogether, or if we attend to the relations of life at all, we should do so in the most mechanical manner, ever aiming at the attainment of indifference. We leave our readers to say which view is most fitted to secure the discharge of social duty, and to promote the happiness of the human race.

Contrast in other things. Our space forbids our proceeding further with the contrast between Christianity and Hindooism. We must leave our readers to contrast, the Hindoo notion of liberation with the Christian idea of salvation, the Hindoo means of obtaining liberation with the Christian means of obtaining life, Hindoo caste with human brotherhood as asserted in the Bible, and above all the character of the popular Hindoo gods with the character of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let the contrast be only candidly contemplated, let our moral nature be allowed to speak, let the testimony of the world's history be heard, and we cannot doubt on which side the verdict will be given.

Hindooism truly represented. We can easily suppose some of our readers to demur to our representation of Hindooism as unduly dark, because unrelieved by the views, which find expression in Hindoo books and Hindoo conversation. The Hindoos, we may be told, are well acquainted with the notion of right and wrong, continually

acknowledge it in their talk, maintain that goodness will be rewarded, and evil punished, acknowledge separate souls and human responsibility, and speak of God as a personal Being, quite distinct from themselves, in whose presence they are, and to whom they are accountable. We reply, This is no fresh information to us. We know it well. We also know this is not Hindooism. These notions have come either from tradition, or still more we believe from the indestructible moral nature of man. These notions, so far from being Hindooism, are radically opposed to it, and furnish weapons with which it may be successfully assailed. The reason why we think Hindooism so pernicious is, that in its entire tendency it wars with these primitive moral principles, and has to a sad extent succeeded in blunting them. Happily it can never succeed in destroying them. The destruction of these principles would be the utter ruin of society.

From this discussion, in which we have been engaged, we think we are now entitled to draw the inference, that Hindooism all through is spotted with human error, while Christianity all through reflects the holiness, wisdom, and love of God. The founders of Hindooism had every conceivable advantage. They received the highest social consideration. All classes looked up to them with reverence. Their wants were supplied without any labour on their part, and they had in consequence abundance of learned leisure. They used a language of vast compass and power, perhaps the most perfect instrument for the expression of human thought ever possessed in this world. They had keen, acute, and highly cultivated minds. Their industry was great. Just think of the toil involved in the composition of whole poems with such studied obscurity that they may be understood as relating to two entirely different and even opposite subjects.

What is the result of all this talent and industry? Whatever may be said for them as poets and philosophers, we are fully justified in saying that as religious teachers and guides, they have been a signal failure. They have not attained to the first principles of true religion. They have promulgated errors, which have done untold mischief, and would unchecked have reduced society to chaos. The course of their literature

The inference
Christianity is of
God, and
Hindooism of
man.

The failure of the
Pundit
mind.

has been downward. The later writers of the Hindoos, instead of improving on their predecessors, have plunged more deeply into the mire.

Buddhism. The Buddhists, who broke away from Brahmanism, have not been more successful. Their atheism was no improvement on the abstract deity of the Hindoos, and while they did good service by their opposition to caste, and by their moral code, they failed to find a foundation for their morality, because they failed to recognize the Moral Governor of the world. Then, how dreary was the goal to which they looked! It is difficult to distinguish their Nirwán from the Hindoo Mochh, and annihilation may be said to represent both. The Hindoos and Buddhists compose to the present time a large portion of the human race, and it is sad to think they have been and are strangers to the very notion of a happy holy conscious eternal existence.

The disadvantages and yet superiority of the Bible writers. The writers of the Bible had no such advantages as the Sages of the far east, and yet we find them teaching a religion worthy of God and fit for man, a religion homogeneous throughout, but rising as it advances into clearer light and higher excellence, a religion which in the future as in the past, but in a far higher degree, will elevate, cheer, and bless the human family.

A course of Hindoo reading recommended. We would strongly recommend a course of Hindoo reading to those who maintain, that all religions are essentially the same. Let them try the Veda, or if their liking takes them in that direction, the philosophic treatises, or if poetry be preferred, the Mahábhárat and Rámáyan, or if they wish to see the books which regulate modern Hindooism, let them enter the Puránas. Let them at the same time read the Old and New Testament, and we think it will be difficult for them to retain their opinion. As for ourselves we must say we have never felt the Bible more precious, and more attested by God's own signature, than when attempting to thread our way through these so called sacred writings. After poring for days over the Prem Ságar, the Bhágawad Gítá, the Vishnu Purána, and such books, we have come back to the Bible with inexpressible delight. On returning to it we have felt as if we had come from arid wastes and stagnant pools to green pastures

and living waters; as if we had escaped from a bog, and had got our footing on a rock; as if we had emerged from a dark and dreary cavern, with dim fleeting spectres and confused perplexing sounds, into the bright light of day. We can thoroughly sympathize with that great reader and profound thinker, John Foster, in the remarks he made after reading translations from the Purānas published by the Asiatic Society. He expresses a hope that accurate translations of these books will be made, and he goes on to say, "They will serve a very excellent purpose in making some classes of infidels keep the peace; and they will also afford any good man, who can spare a few hours to look into them, an occasion of giving a stronger emphasis to his thanks to Heaven for a Divine revelation."

The subject of this Essay is replete with lessons for all who take an interest in the controversies of the day. Not a few are now engaged in trying, in their own strength, to solve the riddle of the universe. These cannot get wholly free from the influence of the solution given in the Bible, but they try to banish it from their view. What is the success of these efforts? Some have given up the riddle, as insoluble, and in their Positivism we find nothing more than in the first position taken by Kapila and Sakya Muni. Some have embraced a Naturalism, which in form is different, but in principle is identical, with the Naturalism of the Veda. Not a few have adopted the Pantheistic theory, and suffuse their writings with it, though they do not put it forth in the extreme and extravagant form in which it is found in the Purānas. Several contend earnestly for Theism, but a Theism, which puts God so far from our apprehension, love, and confidence, and so shuts Him up in His works and laws, that so far as the conscience and heart are concerned, the abstract deity of the Hindoo Philosophers could not have less influence.

The lessons for our day. Failure to solve the riddle of the universe.

We are now acquainted with the phenomena and the laws of nature, as the ancient Hindoos were not, but as to the forces, which lie behind nature, and especially as to that which originates, controls, and directs these forces, our most advanced writers have not taken one step forward. We are not aware that even one single conjecture has been thrown out, fitted to inspire us with the hope, that a new path to the solution is to be opened

up. We have daring and pretentious speculations, but as for satisfaction to either our intellect or moral nature, we might as well go to the writings of Hindoo Sages. A new proof is given that the world by wisdom knows not God. We are far from saying that the Bible gives a full solution to our difficulties—for that we must look to a higher state, if even then we be capable of receiving it—but it throws such light on the problems of human life, as no other book does, it gives the hope of still brighter light, and to part with it is to plunge into the abyss of utter darkness.

The result of adopting the views of 'thinkers.' * If the speculations of our so-called advanced thinkers were generally embraced, what would be the result? The history of the Hindoo mind furnishes us with an answer. The Philosophic era succeeded the Vedic, and preceded the Purānic. The Philosophers, instead of arresting idolatry and superstition, gave them an immense impulse. No people on earth can be satisfied with subtle and well-nigh unintelligible abstractions. They are sure to seek for a religion, which will appeal to their senses and imagination, and which will seem to meet the religious demands of their nature. The Hindoos did not study the philosophic systems, but they took the Pantheism, which pervades them, and uniting it with Polytheism, formed a religion suited to their taste. The notions of our 'thinkers,' if generally accepted, would undoubtedly lead to superstition, though not in the form prevalent among the Hindoos, which the state of society would not permit. When faith was dying out of the Roman Empire, soothsayers, conjurers, miracle-mongers of every class reaped a rich harvest. Superstition flourishes in sceptical France. Even in sceptical Paris it is said that soothsayers are at present driving a profitable trade. We have all heard of the Calendar of Positivism.

The defect of the Pundit mind seen in modern 'thinkers.' What has been the main defect of the Pundit mind, which accounts for its having struck out a Pantheistic and Polytheistic course for the Hindoo race? The defect was not in intellect. That the Pundits have had in no common degree. It was not in imagination. That they had in a superabundant degree. It was not in want of perseverance or effort, as the pile of their extant literature proves. The defect, as we have already observed, was in the torpidity of the moral faculty.

This is apparent at every stage of the Hindoo mind. Kapila, the founder of the Sāṅkhya Philosophy, puts scripture, perception, testimony, and inference among the sources of information for the construction of a Philosophic system, but conscience has no place. We see the result of this defect throughout the Hindoo writings. If only the moral nature of the writers had been exercised, how different would their works have been! If only that portion stood, which could bear the test of a high moral tone, what a heap of ruin would these works present!

Godless speculations now are traceable to the same cause. Reason is indispensable to conscience, and ought to be constantly exercised, but now, as in the past, we must look to the vigorous exercise of the moral faculty, as the best security for truth, and the best preservative against error. When the moral faculty is relaxed, we speedily find the advocacy of views, which are utterly incompatible with true excellence. Mere simpering sentimentality is so far from being identical with the exercise of the moral faculty, that it is often opposed to it.

Let us now speak to our Hindoo friends, who may read this Essay, as directly as we can through these pages.

The Hindoos, who know the English language, and do not become Christians, may be divided into three classes. 1st—A number in belief, in sentiment, and so far as society will allow, in practice, are unhindooized. They look on all religions as false, and not a few, it is feared, have settled down into rank atheism. 2nd—Others are drawn towards Brahminism, and think they find in it something which raises them above the errors of Brahminism, while it does not cut them off from their nationality. 3rd—A third class try to unite western knowledge with the belief and practices of their fathers. To this last class we would address ourselves.

Dear Friends, You will not object, we hope, to our calling you by this title. We use it with all sincerity. For some of your number we have a great respect, and we earnestly desire the welfare of you all. We should not be Christians, if we did not regard you with good will.

You are misjudging us, if you suppose we have been prais-

Partisan- ing Christianity, and condemning Hindooism in a partisan spirit, simply because Christianity is our religion, and Hindooism is yours. In this Essay we have given expression to the convictions we have entertained for years, and which are the result of a prolonged and earnest study of the subject. Mere partisanship is hateful to us.

and arrogance de- You are also misjudging us, if you look on us as arrogantly asserting a superiority over you. We as a people have no reason to be proud. Your fathers were greatly in advance of ours in mental culture and in civilization. If in some respects we are now before you, and you will readily allow that we are, our present superiority is mainly due to that Christianity, which you know well we did not frame for ourselves, but which came to us from the East, though not from your far East. Why should we vaunt ourselves over others for that which came to us from without, which we did not even go to seek, and which we have turned to so imperfect an account? If the human mind by its unaided exertions could have found the way to heaven, your Pundits would have discovered it. But the way cannot thus be found. We firmly believe that in the Gospel the discovery has been made; the Gospel has reached us, and we would in the spirit of humility and love desire to make it universally known.

Sympa- We deeply sympathize with you in your reluctance to part with your ancestral religion, and to break with your kinsmen and countrymen, by the acceptance of a religion brought to you by foreigners. You are proud of your Fathers, your Sages, your vast literature, your great antiquity. We know something of the strength of your caste and family ties, and how fearful is the suffering, often worse than death itself, involved in the disruption of these ties. We have tried to think what we should feel, if persons from a distant nation were to come to us, and tell us, that our religion was baseless, and ought to be abandoned for that which our visitors professed. Our natural feeling would prompt us to resent such a proposal as an insult, but love for truth at all cost, which Christianity has taught us, would we think prompt us to give a hearing to our visitors, and to ponder carefully what they had to say for themselves. Of this we are sure, that if we be Christians,

only because our Fathers were Christians, we are building on the sand, and our structure deserves to be swept away. We often ponder the grounds of our belief, and often try to strip ourselves of prejudice—to say that we are entirely successful would be to say that we are more than human—that we may weigh the claims advanced by other religionists on behalf of their respective systems. Only the truth can in the end do good either to you or us, and we cannot be too eager to obtain and practice it.

We can have only partial success in putting ourselves in thought in your place, but we are ready with all respect to hear what you advance in defence of your position. We have now before us a Lecture delivered before the Benares Institute, in 1867, by one who in its printed form simply designates himself 'A Hindoo.' We have given the Lecture a careful, we can say, a repeated perusal, as we believe it fairly expresses the views of your class. We sympathize with the Lecturer in his indignation at the ill-timed and uncourteous attack on the Hindoo community and religion, which drew forth his defence. We acknowledge his courteous tone towards Christianity and Christians. He recognizes our piety, and is willing to leave us as we are, though he evidently thinks our spiritual privileges are far below his. We give him credit for his vigorous English style. We cannot however go further. The more we have considered the Lecture, the less satisfactory do we deem it as a defence of Hindooism. As his views are yours, kindly hear our objections to his positions.

'A Hindoo' in true Hindoo fashion plunges into the most difficult subjects. After quoting strong words from Sir Wm. Hamilton about the impossibility of knowing God, he proceeds to say, 'Is it not a blasphemy to say that the highest seraph can make God an object of conception? How can He be an object of conception, who transcends the objective and subjective universe, who is the Soul of our souls, who is Intelligence Absolute?' There is much more to the same effect. If our ignorance of God be so absolute, what is meant by the knowledge, which we are so often told leads to 'liberation?' If it be not the knowledge of God, of what is it the knowledge? If God be unknowable, why should we

The Lecture of 'A Hindoo.'

God unknowable.

think or speak of Him at all? In that case religion in every form is impossible. Both Hindoos and Christians maintain that He may be known, but their views of this knowledge diverge most widely, Hindoos maintaining that man may know himself to be the same with God, while Christians contend that we must know Him as infinitely greater and more glorious than we are, as standing in very close relations to us, but eternally distinct from us. Much is said in the Bible about this knowledge. It is represented as in its length and breadth far beyond our attainment. "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea." Yet a degree of knowledge is attainable; for we read, in our Lord's words, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." An excellent Christian writer says, "The whole conversation of a Christian is nothing else but knowledge digested into will, affection, and practice." The full manifestation of God is more than we could bear, but in order to true religion there must be a true knowledge of God, however limited and inadequate. Where the object does not in any measure correspond with the conception, there is no knowledge, and if our mental conception cannot in any degree accord with the Divine nature and character, nothing remains for us to do but sorrowfully to banish the subject from our minds. Thanks to God for the nature He has given us, we are not stopped by the barrier of impassable ignorance. We can as intelligent and moral creatures, originally made in God's image, led by our consciousness, form some conception of the Holy, Just, and Good God, but the abstract Deity of your books, Intelligence, Absolute Passive Intelligence, is utterly unthinkable by us, and is thus to us a mere unintelligible term.

The symbolism of Hindooism.

'A Hindoo' rests his main defence of Hindooism on its being a symbolical and representative religion. Here we are on a ground where we can see each other, and where the questions between us can be brought to an issue. That can be neither symbolized nor represented, which is incapable of being conceived in any degree. There is then an objective reality in religion, which

can be in some measure brought within the reach of our minds; and to the realization of which we are helped by symbol and representation. In order to this end being secured it is indispensable that the symbol be such as at once to make more plain and impressive the object symbolized. The symbol must be simple, directly suggestive of the object, and worthy of it. If the symbol be complicated, laden with details, unsuggestive of the object, and mean in its features, it obscures and degrades what it proposes to explain and adorn. Far better to have no symbols at all, than unintelligible or unworthy symbols.

Let us hear what the Lecturer has to say. He represents the Poet Cowper as acting on Hindoo principles in his well-known address to his mother's picture. Why did that picture so touch the Poet's heart? Because the picture accorded with the Poet's recollection of the features of his long-lost mother. If the picture had been that of a coarse repulsive woman, utterly unlike his mother, and yet called by his mother's name, he would have thrown it into the fire, instead of addressing it, "O that those lips had language!" Our Hindoo friends, you must allow us, if we speak the truth, to express our thorough conviction, that your symbols of God are far more unworthy of Him than the picture of the ugliest woman that ever existed would have been of Cowper's mother. We know your worship well. We have witnessed it hundreds, we might say, thousands of times. We have seen the weary traveller bow down before some rudely carved stone, and we have wondered what he could find in it to raise his heart to God. We have seen the sick and the sorrowful, imploring relief from the gods they supposed to dwell in these stony forms. We have been in some of your most sacred temples, and have there seen the images, which from day to day receive the homage of thousands. We cannot think that any of yourselves will maintain, that tried by the standard of human taste these images are beautiful, or suggestive of intellectual and moral qualities. The beauty and unearthly grandeur, which the Greek sculptors succeeded in imparting to their statues, have been beyond the reach of your artists, doubtless in a great degree because they have been beyond the reach of your Pundits.

Here all our sympathies are with your Vedic fathers. If we

must worship outward symbols, let us by all means have the beautiful, the great, and the terrible in nature—the sun above us, the moon and the stars in their mid-night splendour, the lofty mountains, the wide spreading vallies, the crash of the thunder, the flash of the lightning, and the roar of the tempest. These things have often awed the most thoughtless into reverence, but we can perceive nothing in the wild, grotesque, and forbidding images with which your temples are filled, either to increase our knowledge of the Most High, or to inspire us with love to Him. God's own works are as symbols vastly superior to yours. Tried then by your own standard of symbolic worship, Hindooism is found fatally wanting.

The idolatry of Hindooism.

'A Hindoo' resents the charge of idolatry as utterly unjust. He does so in terms almost identical with those of image-worshippers of other countries and ages, as two quotations from the writings of Augustine, a famous Christian Divine, who flourished in the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century, will show. Augustine commenting on the 96th Psalm introduces an idolater saying, "We do not worship a stone, but the virtues, the strength, and the powers of the great God." Again, in one of his letters Augustine says that an idolater named Maximus Madaurensis spoke to him in this strain, "Who is so mad, or so void of sense, as to doubt whether there be more gods than One? We invoke the virtues of this One God, under many names, diffused through the frame of the whole world." In the very same strain 'A Hindoo' says, "It is not the image that we worship as the Supreme Being, but the omnipresent Spirit that pervades the image as he pervades the whole universe."

We suppose this defence is as old as image-worship itself. To such worship there has always been a strong tendency, and yet it appears so absurd, that thoughtful and intelligent men must find something to explain it away. Whatever plausible argument may be advanced for image-worship, we believe if history teaches anything, it teaches, that such worship materializes and debases the human mind, gives most unworthy views of God, and in the case of the vast majority leads to a fetichism, which in principle is identical with that of the most barbarous tribes. Till India rise above this idolatry,

she will never have her proper place in the world. The enlightened among you would be much better engaged in denouncing it, than in bolstering it up with worn out and sophistical arguments. The Lecturer is so wrapped up in his symbolic worship, that he seems to think the writers of the Bible would have exempted it from their censure, if they had been only acquainted with it! To our Essay on the Bible we must refer you for the reason, why the worship of God under the form of images is forbidden, though He be constantly spoken of under human relationships and aspects. To what we have there said we only add the words of an able writer of our day. "Inevitably, by laws of association which we cannot control, whatever is habitually associated with the creation of religious emotion comes to be invested with an artificial sacredness."

In God's worship we cannot but have some rites. These were numerous under Judaism, and yet how simple, impressive, and intelligible, compared with the innumerable rites of Hindooism! In Christianity the rites are very few, and yet full of instruction. Whenever rites are multiplied and complicated, they only tend to hide what they ought to reveal, and to turn men into rite-observers rather than God-worshippers. Rites.

'A Hindoo' tells us that there are visions in the Bible as well as in the Hindoo writings. The two he gives are recorded as visions, and this is the case with most of the visions mentioned in the Bible, so that we cannot confound them with the narrative of facts. We wish the Lecturer had given us the famous vision of Krishna found in the eleventh chapter of the Bhāgawad Gītā, which is pronounced by some to be the most impressive passage in the whole range of Sanscrit literature. The contrast to our minds is very marked. In the Hindoo writings it seems well nigh impossible to separate vision from fact. Throughout whole books we are kept in the mist of vision. Visions.

This leads us to observe that you would confer a great favour on those Englishmen, who take a deep interest in you, who wish to know you, and who are bent on promoting your good, if you would plainly tell us what you believe in reference to your gods, for instance in reference to Siva and Krishna. 'A Hindoo' complains of his gods being reviled. How are we to regard the Hindoo gods?

Do not your own Pundits deserve the blame? Has any Christian spoken to their discredit, as your writers have done, if we take words in their obvious sense?

Rejected
Puránas.

In the Lecture we find a note, which may well be termed notable. There is no passage in the Lecture, which has been to us so interesting and hopeful. "I do not include here those Puránas, and divisions or passages of Puránas that are considered by the most orthodox Pundits as spurious, such as the extant Brahma-vaivartá Purána and Pátála Khanda of the Padma Purána, the former of which has been the chief cause of disseminating unholy ideas with respect to the Divine Krishna. It is *corruptions* such as these that it is the duty of every true Indian patriot to remove, not to confound them with the genuine religion, and then to abuse it, without even caring to know ~~what~~ *what it is.*" Why are the books mentioned worthy of condemnation? No historical argument is advanced against them. If tried by historical tests, what Purána will stand? It is merely intimated that they misrepresent 'Divine Krishna.' We do not profess to have read these Puránas, but we know something regarding them. We are told that the Brahma-vaivartá Purán is mainly taken up with the loves of Krishna and Rádhabá, the wife of Ayun Ghos, his favourite mistress, and that the Pátála Khanda of the Padma Purána, among other things, dwells on Krishna's juvenile doings. The statements of these books, it appears, are unworthy of Krishna. A Hindoo's moral nature rises against them. Are we then to receive as worthy of Krishna what we read in the Bhágavad Purána, of which the Prem Ságar is the well-known episode, in the Vishnu Purána, and other books deemed sacred? Are we to receive as fact what we are told of his gambols, his relations to the Gopees, his stealing their clothes at Muthra, and the other stories, which you know far better than we do? If you wish us to receive these statements as facts, what are we to think of 'Divine Krishna?' Can we regard, we will not say with reverence, but with respect, one who acted such a part? Do we find in him a worthy manifestation of God? We would put the same questions to you in reference to well-known passages in the lives of Brahmá and Siva, which are familiar even to the unlettered of your nation. How can wor-

shippers fail to be corrupted by such narratives? You all know what Krishna said to Arjun, 'Mankind follow in my steps in everything, son of Prithá.' If you wish us to receive as allegory what is said about your gods, it surely stands much in need of an interpreter, and however good may be its meaning, its form is not only perilous, but certainly pernicious to persons constituted as we are.

'A Hindoo' speaks of the 'Holy Trinity' of his faith, with their Energies as consorts. You know what is said about the jealousies, the quarrels, the intrigues, the domestic troubles of your Trinity. When you find similar statements in the Christian scriptures you can in fairness assert the similarity to the Christian Trinity, but not till then. The Hindoo Trinity.

It was natural for the Lecturer to praise his religion, but we were not prepared for an English-speaking Hindoo, who knows something of English literature, indulging in the excessive laudation of the following sentences. Laudation of Hindooism.

The Hindoos "have conceived sublimer notions of the Deity than any other nation ancient and modern, and deny the very existence of matter."

The Hindoos' "Holy Religion."

"The Supreme Being Himself, out of sheer mercy to His ignorant creatures, has assumed glorious forms for our meditation, and in those forms performed deeds of power and mercy, in order that by glorifying them we may ennoble and purify our hearts with devotion."

"Do not the Puránas teach us to love God with our heart and soul? Do they not teach us to love our neighbours as ourselves?"

"The Bhágawad Gítá in its sublime spirituality surpasses, with the exception of the Upanishads on which it is founded, perhaps all other theological books existing in any language."

"This is but an extract from one passage among innumerable passages of the Puránas, sublimer even than this sublime hymn, and exceeding in quantity and purity all that has ever been written about the Deity in any other language, or perhaps all other languages taken together."

"Colonel Kennedy spoke of the Vedánta as the 'most spiritual system that ever was imagined by man.' It is the

Vedānta based on the Upanishads that teaches us the true knowledge of God."

Comments
on this
laudation.

These and similar statements, no doubt made in perfect sincerity, fill us with amazement, coming from one who knows something of Christian literature. Have we then read the Hindoo writings backward? Have we been weary and disgusted, when we ought to have been delighted, and devout?

'Holy religion!' with Siva and Krishna, and all the stories told regarding them, as its central figures!

'Holy Religion!' and yet pervaded by Pantheism, which makes God the one agent in the universe!

'Love to our neighbours as ourselves!' and yet Manu's laws are to be obeyed, and the institution of Caste is Divine!

'Sheer mercy!' Is it then untrue that Vishnu was doomed to human births by Righu's curse, not to say anything of other reasons, which have been assigned? Apart from this, the object of Vishnu's incarnations was essentially defective. The incarnations of Vishnu, we read, were for the deliverance of gods and men from demons and oppressors, but there was not one to help man in his direst need, and confer on him the highest good—to save him from sin, and array him with excellence.

'Love to God!' and yet love even in its highest form is nothing better than the acting out of the quality of truth or goodness, which, as well as the qualities of passion and darkness, must be subdued in order to liberation!

'The sublime and surpassing spirituality of the Bhāgawad Gītā!' Will you hear what the famous eclectic Philosopher Victor Cousin has said regarding it? If you know anything of Cousin, you know he was eager to find out good in different systems, and to reconcile what others deemed antagonistic. His opinion is therefore of high value. He says, "You will comprehend how before this kind of theism, at once terrible and chimerical, and represented in extravagant and gigantic symbols, human nature must have trembled and denied itself;—how art, in its powerless attempt to represent being in itself, must have risen without limit to colossal and irregular creations;—how God being all, and man nothing, a formidable theocracy must have pressed upon humanity, taking from it

all liberty, all movement, all practical interest, all true morality;—and again you will comprehend how man, despising himself, has not been able to take any thought for recalling the memory of his actions; how there is no history of man, and no chronology in India.”

We indicate by these remarks the reasons for our surprise at the Lecturer's laudation of Hindooism. If however you accept his statements about his ‘Holy Religion’ and ‘Divine Krishna,’ you are surely very wanting in your duty. We believe we have received a Revelation, and as we deem it a most precious boon, we are very desirous that you share it with us. If however you have received a still clearer Revelation, is it not very selfish in you to keep it to yourselves? If Krishna be what he is represented in the Bhágawad Gítá and elsewhere, we have a part in him as well as you, and it is cruel in you to exclude us. It is full time for you to open your gates and receive all, for according to you, Krishna is the Supreme, and if he be, we are bound to adore him. You and we ought to be in the same fold, for we both have manifestly the same nature and responsibilities. If on account of the barriers of your system, we cannot join you, we affectionately ask you to come over to us. Our gates are always open. In the Christian Church there is room for you all, and we can assure you of a hearty welcome.

Open your
door to us,
or join us.

The Lecturer from his stand-point gives us his views of necessity and free-will. This question has been discussed from the beginning of the world, and will be to its end. According to Milton man alone has not engaged in the discussion. He represents Satan and his compeers as bringing their intellect to bear on it. It is confessedly a very difficult question, but it has often struck us there is a straight road to our reaching that part of the truth regarding it, which it is most important for us to know, and which our Eastern and Western Philosophers have often missed, because they have betaken themselves to a road with endless windings, and conducting all who tread it into a labyrinth, from which there is no escape. It is undoubted that human beings are very powerfully influenced by their circumstances, education, and inherited temperament. If however they be at the absolute disposal of such things, how

Necessity
and free-
will.

can they be responsible for either their character or their deeds? Why should they either praise or blame themselves? Let us look within, and we shall find there is something there, without which we should not be human beings, which so far from being the slave of these things is their rightful lord, and ought to assert its right to bend them to its purposes. It is this great something, this power of choice, this supremacy of conscience, call it what we may, that in a very special manner constitutes our personality, and invests it with greatness. It is most important for you and us, for all human beings indeed, that personal responsibility be fully acknowledged. One of our strongest objections to your system, is that by its Pantheism; by its teaching men to say in Pundit phrase 'I shall eventually shake off the night mare, and know myself to be the One, and then, dismissing the notion of self *be* the One;' by its fatalism; by attributing misdeeds to former births, of which we know nothing, and which explain nothing (for how without responsibility could there have been misdeeds in former births?) you not only tamper with, but overthrow the foundations, on which responsibility must rest. You know well that liars, thieves, robbers, and murderers continually say, when suffering for their crimes, 'This is my fate. This has come on me on account of what occurred in former births,' thus silencing* the voice of conscience. Our moral nature rises against doctrines, from which such consequences flow.

The opinions of
Dr. H. H.
Wilson,

'A Hindoo' quotes with approbation a passage from the writings of Dr. H. H. Wilson, and speaks of him as a capable judge. As Dr. W. gave his great talents and his life to the study of Sanscrit literature, he deserves to be heard. It was natural for him to prize highly the literature, to which he had given so much attention, and to be ready to say when he could, a good word for the Pundits, with whom he had been so closely associated, but truth compelled him to condemn both the principles inculcated, and the practices enjoined in the Hindoo writings, and he did this with increasing emphasis, as he advanced in life. We are sorry 'A Hindoo' did not quote Dr. W. more largely. To supply his defect, let us give two or three sentences: "The Purānas teach constantly incompatible doctrines. * * * Incongruities are as frequent in the Vedas as in

the Puránas." Dr. W. says the researches of scholars "establish the important fact, that the belief and practices of the people of India in the present day have no warrant from those writings, upon which they have hitherto maintained them to be based. The religion of the Vedas and that of the Brahminical Hindoos of the present day are totally different things." Professor Max Muller in the strongest terms supports Dr. W.'s statement. He says, "There is no authority whatever in the hymns of the Veda for the complicated system of castes; no authority for the offensive privileges claimed by the Brahmans; no authority for the degraded position of the Sudras. * * There is no trace in the Veda of the atrocities of Siva and Káli, nor of the licentiousness of Krishna, nor of most of the miraculous adventures of Vishnu." Dr. Wilson speaks of the doings of modern Hindooism in words as strong as any Missionary could use. He says, "It matters not how atrocious a sinner may be, if he paints his face, his breast, his arms, with certain sectarial marks; or, which is better, if he brands his skin permanently with them with a hot red stamp; if he is constantly chanting hymns in honour of Vishnu; or, what is equally efficacious, if he spends hours in the simple reiteration of his name, or names; if he die with the word Hari, or Ráma, or Krishna on his lips, and the thought of him in his mind, he may have lived a monster of iniquity—he is certain of heaven." In these impressive words we have the expression of Dr. W.'s deliberate judgment.

"A Hindoo" also speaks with high respect of the late learned Dr. Ballantyne, as one entitled to be heard. Dr. B. was an enthusiastic Sanscrit scholar, said much in praise of the depth and subtlety of the Pundits, and sharply reprov'd those who he thought undervalued them. His opinion then deserves to be favourably regarded by his Hindoo friends. In the Introduction to the only fragment published of his 'Bible for the Pundits,' you will find a letter addressed to a friend, who had impugned some of his statements. In that letter placed by himself before his Pundit friends, he says, "I entirely agree with you that 'the distinction between right and wrong is well nigh obliterated among the mass of the people.' You say—'How far this state of things has been brought about by the Philoso-

and of Dr.
Ballan-
tyne.

phic systems of this country, I must leave you to judge.' * * This state of things, whether *brought about* or not by the Philosophical systems, is emphatically symbolized by them." What are we to think of Philosophic systems, all of which are found in books received by you as Shastras, which, if they have not produced, have symbolized the obliteration to a fearful extent of all distinction between right and wrong?

We have dwelt the longer on the Lecture of 'A Hindoo' because he has given expression to views, which we have often heard from several of your number. We thought we could not speak to you more directly than by answering him.

Conclu-
sion.

The question for you and us is not, What did our Fathers think? How did our Fathers act? What was the opinion held by this great man or that? If we deviate from custom, how will our friends treat us? The question is, What does truth require? To it our homage is due. On it we are dependent for true excellence, and abiding happiness. The opinions of our fellow-creatures are of comparatively little moment, but it is all important that truth be known and obeyed. How can we get into the presence of this sovereign? What is the avenue to his throne? The avenue is that of candour, earnestness, humility, and determination to follow conscience at whatever risk or cost. Let that avenue be trodden, and we shall find ourselves in the presence of our rightful monarch.

Allow us, in conclusion, to give you the counsel that you examine afresh the external and internal evidence for the Divine origin of Christianity; that you inquire if any such evidence can be produced for Hindooism; that you contrast the two systems, and especially that you contemplate the character of the Lord Jesus Christ. If you consider the whole subject in the proper spirit, in dependence on aid from heaven, we anticipate the happiest results. The immediate consequences may be very painful, but the permanent result will be glorious. Your character will be raised, you will attain true honour, and secure abiding happiness. The names most revered on earth by the highest and the best are the names of those who have toiled, and suffered, and even died in the cause of truth and righteousness.

“The world by wisdom knew not God.”—ST. PAUL.

“The credibility of a religion must not be determined by its age, but by its divinity ; and you should consider not when, but what you began to worship.”—*Arnobius adversus gentes*, A. D. 297.

“In the hymns of the Veda we see man left to himself to solve the riddle of the world.” “No man who has not examined patiently and honestly the other religions of the world, can know what Christianity really is, or can join with such truth and sincerity in the words of St. Paul: ‘I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.’”—PROFESSOR MAX MÜLLER.

"The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son : that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father who hath sent Him."—St. John, v, 22, 23. "Who-soever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father."—1 JOHN, ii, 23.

"From the hour of its portentous birth, Muhammadanism, notwithstanding its own absurdities, was the unceasing censor of perverted Christianity. Based upon its leading tenet of the unity of the Divine nature, sincere in its devotion, simple in its worship * * it fiercely accused the Christian world of idolatry and infidelity, of folly, superstition, and imposture. It had retained some valuable truths of the Patriarchal Theism ; and, so far, was fitly corrective of corrupted Christianity."—SHARON TURNER.

"The feeling of the supremacy of God above all creatures, of the immeasurable distance between Him and all things that are made—this was the fundamental key-note of Muhammad's religious convictions. But the other element necessary to the perfect development of divine consciousness, the feeling of relationship and communion with God, this was altogether defective in him. * * As the ethical form given to the idea of God determines the character of the moral spirit to which a religion gives birth, so, consequently, although some isolated sublime moral sentiments, strangely contrasted with the ruling spirit of his religion, may be met with in the system of Muhammad, yet, taking it as a whole, it is singularly defective, through this want of fundamental truth, in the ethical comprehension of the idea of God. * * Through the contracted notion of the Divine nature, Muhammad's system was also wanting, as to its moral character, in the all-pervasive and illuminating principle of a holy love. The ethical element being thus defective, no room is found for the feeling which points to the necessity of redemption."—NEANDER.

Muhammadanism Contrasted with Christianity.*

In this Essay we propose to consider Muhammadanism in its own nature, and in its relation to Christianity.

In Hindooism we saw the human mind endeavouring to solve the great problems of the universe, outside the influences, which moulded and directed the writers of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. We cannot suppose the isolation of the Pundits to have been such as to have left them untouched by what had transpired among other branches of the human family. The early connexion of nations now widely separated from each other has been demonstrated by an agreement in language, traditions, customs, and rites, which can be accounted for only by their having a common source in the distant past. The primitive religious notions of the race, which we may call its patrimony, were in a special manner entrusted to the Jews, but in some form or other they reached the other nations

The failure of
Hindooism.

* Throughout this Essay, as we have been writing for English readers in India, we have used the more correct forms, Muhammad and Qurán, instead of the forms long current in Europe, Mahomet and Coran. 'Islám,' which means 'peace, greeting, safety, salvation,' and hence 'surrender to Him who gives peace' is the name by which the followers of Muhammad delight to call their religion, and they call themselves 'Musalmán' or 'Muslim,' one who has surrendered himself to God, and has obtained salvation. They are in their own opinion *par excellence* 'Ahl-i-Islám,' the people of salvation, who have surrendered themselves wholly to God. The Qurán is divided into chapters, which are called Suras. Kaliph (more correctly Khalifa) means successor and was the name given to Muhammad's successors as the rulers of the Musalmáns.

of the earth. Still the influence on the Hindoos from without was too feeble and indirect to interfere to any extent with the working of their own minds. They were well-nigh unfettered in the prosecution of their inquiries into the deep things of God and the universe, and we have seen the result to be signal failure. The Living God has remained unknown, the first principles of His government have not been discerned, the true nature of man has not been discovered, and consequently man's spiritual wants have remained unsupplied, the right aim of life has not been pursued, and the darkness which covers his future has not been dispelled. The failure of Hindooism, we observed, gives additional strength to our assurance that Christianity is from God, and is ordained by Him for the whole of the human race."

The professed aim of Muhammadanism. We now come to consider a religion professedly based on Judaism and Christianity, and which could not have appeared, but for their previous existence. We have to consider a religion which pays homage to almost every name revered by Jews and Christians, and which, instead of assuming an antagonistic attitude to their respective systems, declares its object to be the re-affirmation of their leading principles, and the setting forth of their great lessons in the form most adapted to the new condition of the nations. As Christianity professes to be in entire accord with the principles of Judaism, while raising the worshipper to a higher stage, so Muhammadanism pays profound deference to both, while professing to conduct the servants of God to a still fuller knowledge of Him, and to a still loftier piety. Jews and Christians are with Musalmans Ahl-i-Kitáb, people of the Book, those to whom revelation has been committed. In Hindooism we see man trying to frame a religion for himself. In Muhammadanism we see man taking the religion revealed through Prophets and our Lord Jesus Christ, and trying to present it to us in an improved form. A religion with such pretensions, which has so widely spread, which has had and continues to have millions of adherents, and which notwithstanding its profession has ever been and continues to be a formidable and determined foe to Christianity, demands patient and candid investigation. Let us with all the impartiality we can com-

mand, and all the thought we can exercise, examine the claim of Muhammadanism to be an improvement on Christianity, or at least to be more fitted to guide human beings in these ages in the way to heaven.

We would at the outset state our deep regret that Muhammad and his religion have often been treated by Christian writers with great unfairness. Every idle story which could disparage both Muhammad and his system has been eagerly accepted, and every good thing, which could tell in their favour, however well accredited, has been rejected. The result is, that much evil has been charged, which was never committed, and good has been concealed, which ought to have been acknowledged. It would fare ill with Christianity, if it required any such falsehood or unfairness to maintain its claims. Instead of seeking support of this nature it utterly disclaims it, as a direct infringement of its spirit and letter, and an insult to its pure and lofty cause.

Misrepresentation of Muhammad and his religion.

As an illustration of the unfairness to which we refer we may mention the character given to Muhammad for many a day. He was generally called an arch-impostor. He was described as one of the falsest and basest of men, as from the first a conscious deceiver, as setting up claims, to which he knew he had no right, as stained by every vice, as possessed of no redeeming quality, as in fact a demon in human form.

Illustration.

We have now before us a treatise by Henry Smith, a famous Divine of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, whose sermons have been frequently republished, and are held in high estimation to the present day. The treatise is entitled "God's arrow against Atheism and Irreligion," and one chapter is occupied with proving "the religion of Mahomet to be a false and wicked religion." There is little said about Muhammad's religion, but there is much said about himself. The most wild and improbable stories are told,—that he was addicted to unnatural lust, that he was much given to wine, that his last illness was brought on by a drunken bout, during which poison was administered to him, that he fell on a dung hill and would have been devoured by pigs, had not his friends come to his help, and much more to the same effect. We are even gravely told that he was put into an iron coffin, and that loadstones

are so placed, that the coffin is actually at the present time suspended between heaven and earth! It is wonderful that a man of Henry Smith's strong judgment and high character could have believed such absurd tales. Yet they are given in good faith, and for every one of them learned authority is adduced, the authorities being, it is only fair to say, almost entirely of pre-reformation times. The readiness in those times to believe everything which could militate against Muhammadism is shown by the word, which Wycliffe in his English New Testament generally applies to idols. The word is 'Mawmets.' 1 John, v, 21. "Little children, keep yourselves from mawmetis." Idolatry was called "Mawmetry," that is Mahomet and Mahometry,—a very hateful term, and therefore fit to be applied to a hateful thing like idolatry, although image-worship has ever been the object of intense abhorrence to Muhammadans. We mention these misrepresentations to show the views widely held by Christians in former times, and held by many down to our own day. Thanks to the investigation and fairness of modern scholars, juster views now prevail.

Muham-
mad un-
duly ex-
toll'd by
his fol-
lowers.

While Jews and Christians have been ready to welcome every story which could tend to the vilification of Muhammad, his adherents have been at least as ready to welcome every thing which could tend to his glorification. Perhaps no man ever lived, whose character has been so eagerly discussed by friends and foes, and regarding whom such opposite opinions have been pronounced. More than a century elapsed after his death before any biography of Muhammad was written, and that biography is now known only by the use of it made by authors who flourished more than three-fourths of a century afterwards. By that time Muhammadanism had achieved splendid success in the world, and its founder was lauded to the skies by its adherents. Persons of learning and position, encouraged and sustained by the Kaliphs, made it their life work to collect every floating report, which could throw light on the Prophet's life, with what success even in their own opinion may be seen by the statement, that of 600,000 traditions ascertained by one to be current, only 4000 were deemed authentic, and of 500,000 traditions said to be amassed by

another, he retained only 4000. Some of these collectors seem to have been thoroughly honest, and they give their authorities for their details, but they themselves and those from whom they got their information were too biassed, and the course of tradition was too long and circuitous, to satisfy those who receive as truth only what is proved to be true. Between excessive praise on the one hand, and excessive dispraise on the other, the impartial inquirer is not a little perplexed. Here the Qurán comes to our aid. From it no detailed and connected biography can be drawn, but it reflects Muhammad's character more faithfully than any biography can do, and by it every biography must be tested.

The most determined opponent of Muhammad as a Prophet ought to be ready to acknowledge he had some great and estimable qualities. Left an orphan at a very early age, his father having died before his birth, and his mother when he was in his seventh year, he became the charge first of his grandfather, and afterwards of an uncle, who treated him with the utmost kindness. As a member of one of the most distinguished families at Mecca, he was not, though an orphan, in a depressed condition. He led in his youth the simple and hardy life common to his countrymen. He seems to have won in no ordinary degree the confidence and love of all with whom he came into contact. So high was the esteem in which he was held that he received the title of 'Al-Amín' 'the Faithful.' In the twenty-fifth year of his age he was married to a rich widow, Khadíjah, fifteen years older than himself, whose love and trust he had secured by his faithful and wise management of her affairs, as her commercial steward. During the twenty-five years of their married life he was a true and loving husband, keeping to Khadíjah alone, though polygamy prevailed around him.

Muhammad's estimable qualities.

The doctrine of one God, the Creator and Ruler of all, which Muhammad proclaimed with so much power when he entered on his public career, was well known in Arabia. It had come down from the earliest times, and though greatly obscured by idolatry it had not been extinguished. It continued to hold a recognized place among the established and ancient beliefs of the people. It was not only maintained by the Arabians as

The monotheism of the Arabians.

a doctrine they had received from their Fathers, but it was kept continually before them by the Jews and Christians, who were numerous in their country, and with whom they were all more or less acquainted. With them and their views Muhammad doubtless became well acquainted, not only in his own country, but in the course of his commercial journeys to Syria.

Muham- by all, took an extraordinary hold on Muhammad's mind. In
m a d ' s the retirement, to which we are told he often betook himself,
early ca- it was pondered by him, till his soul was fired with the resolve
reer as a to proclaim it to his countrymen, and urge it on their accep-
prophet. tance. He saw God to be the sovereign. He saw the homage
due to Him given to idols, and as a loyal subject he was filled
with indignation. The upholding and enforcing of His claims
he felt to be the vocation of his life, to be prosecuted till
death, whatever the consequences to himself might be.

We may suppose Muhammad's patriotism to have had some, perhaps considerable, influence on the formation of his religious opinions. At an early period we are told he was a member of a patriotic league, and all through life he was a thorough Arabian. In the state of his country there was much to affect and grieve him, as a thoughtful man. The tribes were at constant strife with each other, which must have led to their utter destruction, but for the period of peace secured by their sacred season. The energies of the people were thus worse than wasted, and brave though they were, owing to their dissensions the surrounding nations ruled over some of the fairest portions of their country. The evil was increased by religious disunion. The thought of ending their intestine troubles, and of forming them into a great glorious nation, on the basis of devotion to the One True God, must have had strong attractions for a mind like that of Muhammad.

When the doctrine of the Divine unity and sovereignty had seized his soul, it was natural for him not only to set his heart on its promulgation, but to believe that he was specially commissioned by heaven to assert a truth so great, so glorious, and yet so disregarded. To this belief he was most probably helped by the fits, apparently epileptic, to which we know on the best

authority he was subject.* Strange visions have often been seen by persons in such a condition, and the visions in all likelihood seen by him, so accordant with the views he cherished when in full possession of his powers, were naturally deemed a Divine Revelation. Ought we not to trace to the same cause the visions of Swedenborg? He too was subject to fits, he too saw visions, and they too may be explained without questioning his sincerity on the one hand, or calling in a supernatural cause on the other.

Between the assumption of the Prophetic Office by Muhammad in the fortieth year of his age, till his flight from Mecca in his fifty-third year, he presented a rare instance of moral courage, which deserves our sympathy and admiration. He boldly proclaimed the doctrines he held. He held on his course, though reviled and persecuted. His life was exposed to the greatest peril, and would have been certainly sacrificed, but for the help of his kindred, many of whom had no belief in his Mission. The only weapons he then used were instruction, persuasion, and warning. He had indeed his seasons of depression, caused by the obstinacy and hatred of his people. He appears to have meditated suicide more than once, and there can be little doubt that in despair he momentarily yielded to

* Some able writers deny that Muhammad was subject to fits, but the proofs adduced by such men as Weil and Sprenger seem to us decisive. The Mizán-ul-Haqq supplies us with the following summary of the evidence. "In the 'Insánul-Ayun' Ibu Iz, háq relates upon the authority of his elders, that, before the descent of the Qurán, when in Mecca, Muhammad was under treatment for a disease with which he was affected, proceeding from the influence of the evil eye; and that after the descent of the Qurán, he still had this disease; that he would become unconscious for a time, that he would tremble, his eyes being closed, and his mouth foaming, and that he would bellow like a young camel. Abú Harira says, "While the revelation was descending to him, none of us could look upon him, because his mouth foamed, and his eyes closed, and sometimes he would cry like a young camel." Now according to these and other accounts, there can be no doubt that Muhammad was subject to fits of epilepsy, for the symptoms above mentioned are exactly those of that disease. It should be noticed, too, that persons who suffer from this malady sometimes have very wonderful visions. Thus Muhammad, taking the things he saw in this kind of epileptic state for a revelation or an angel, did truly in the first place consider himself as having a commission from God, and afterwards asserted and proclaimed that his imaginations were inspired and the Word of God. And having fled to Medina, and escaped from the rule of the Koreish, he became the chief and ruler of his followers."

an unworthy compromise with idolatry, but his courage returned, and he again braced himself for his great undertaking, thereby exposing himself to more bitter opposition than ever. His general conduct during that period seems to have been greatly superior to that of his fellow-countrymen. Tried by their standard his was a life of virtue, self-denial, truthfulness, and kindness. Does not truth bring us to the conclusion that throughout that time of toil, struggle, and peril, Muhammad was a sincere and high minded man?

His later
career.

The last ten years of Muhammad's life form a remarkable, but not a pleasing contrast to the preceding thirteen years. He is no longer the reviled and persecuted preacher, continually exposed to personal violence, and shielded from his enemies by powerful relatives. Now he is the Prophet-King of the people among whom he dwells, and receives from them profound homage. "He no longer wields mere moral weapons. Now the sword is unsheathed, and on it, far more than on argument and persuasion, dependence is placed for the spread of Islām. He is hated by vast numbers perhaps more than ever, but his new position of power will no longer allow him to be despised. He is still called to confront his foes, but now it is on the field of battle, surrounded by brave devoted adherents, ready to shed their blood on his behalf. Till near the end of his career, when opposition had been beaten down, and there was the usual flocking to the winning side, his last years were spent in incessant struggle. It is impossible for us to form a judgment on the criminations and recriminations, the attacks and reprisals of those years, but it is clear that Muhammad's character deteriorated with his rising fortunes. He retained indeed his simple habits. His love to his friends was unabated, and continued to draw forth their warmest attachment. He acted in a generous manner to most who submitted to him, even though formerly they had been his bitter enemies. His life abounded with kind acts to those around him. The obedience rendered to him, and the unbounded trust reposed in him by those best acquainted with him, are proofs which cannot be gainsaid, that he had in a high degree the qualities, which constitute a ruler of men. He adopted measures well adapted to secure success. Yet there is preponderating evidence that on several occasions he acted

a cruel and treacherous part to those who refused to submit. The fierce, we might say, the truculent tone of the Qurán confirms that evidence. We often find such passages as this, "Verily those who disbelieve in our signs, we will surely cast to be broiled in hell-fire. So often as their skins shall be well burned, we will give them other skins in exchange, that they may taste the sharper torments." Sura 4th.

The domestic life of Muhammad during this period is well known. The man who had been so faithful to Khadíjah, after her death added wife to wife, and concubine to concubine. No disciple was allowed more than four wives, but he imposed no such limit on himself. To him as a Prophet of the Lord a license was given, which was withheld from others.

What shall we say to the Prophetic claims of Muhammad during his last ten years? He professed to receive frequent revelations from God. He was ever ready to meet emergencies with messages from the Most High, directing him to do the very thing he wished to do. Every change in his plans was supported by a new message, accordant with the change. These successive communications have been compared to a Military Order Book. Even the gratification of his passions, the aberrations which shocked his devoted friends, and the domestic broils caused by his unbridled lust became the subject of messages, sent, according to him, for the very purpose of giving a Divine sanction to his conduct, and stilling the clamour of his wives and adherents. We give one passage as a specimen of these so-called Divine messages. "O prophet, we have allowed thee thy wives, unto whom thou hast given their dower, and also the slaves which thy right hand possesseth, of the booty which God hath granted thee; and the daughters of thy uncle, and the daughters of thy aunts, both on thy father's side, and on thy mother's side, who have fled with thee, and any believing woman, if she give herself unto the prophet, in case the prophet desireth to take her to wife. This is a peculiar privilege granted unto thee above the rest of the true believers. We know what we have ordained them concerning their wives and the slaves which their right hand possesses, lest it should be deemed a crime in thee: for God is gracious and merciful." Sura 33. If in such circumstances a sharp re-

His prophetic claims.

proof like that administered by Nathan to David had been the burden of a message, it might have come from above, but we reject with horror the thought that God could have given His approbation to the life Muhammad was living. If he really believed that such messages had been given to him by God, he furnishes one of the most shocking proofs ever presented, of the extent to which self-deception can lead a human being, and makes it manifest that a person may be intensely religious, as unquestionably Muhammad was, and yet that his religion may be so ignorant and misdirected, as to present some of the worst features of the most daring irreligion. What are we to think of the moral standing of followers, who on a mere *ipse dixit* could receive such communications as Divine? What are we to think of the honesty of the man who, in giving stories which he must have known had come to him from Jews, could dictate such words as these? "I had no knowledge regarding the Heavenly chiefs, when they disputed; verily, it hath been revealed to me for no other purpose than (to prove) that I am a public Preacher," Sura 38; and again, "This is one of the secret histories, which we have revealed to thee; thou wast not present with them," Sura 12th. The personal qualities of Muhammad were no doubt of a high order, but trust in him as a Prophet stamps the low moral condition of the age.

Misrepresentation of Muhammadanism. Muhammadanism, as well as Muhammad himself, has often been unfairly treated. It has been often described as an unmitigated curse to the world—as the enemy of truth, the blight of excellence, the stronghold of destructive fanaticism, the nurse of all dark and debasing passions. We thoroughly believe it has done much harm in the world, and that it must be overthrown in order to men rising to the true knowledge and love of God, but without shutting our eyes to the plain teaching of history, we cannot deny that it has been employed in the Providence of God for the accomplishment of good.

Denunciation of idolatry. The more we know of the corruptions of Christianity in the days of Muhammad, the more we sympathize with his denunciation of idolatry. This denunciation was not only directed against those called idolaters, but also against those called

Christians. The Church of that day needed a scourge. Neander the Church Historian describes the Christianity of that era as "drained of its life by rigid formularies, ceremonies, and superstitions." Rampant idolatry was practised under the Christian name. Images of Christ, of martyrs, and of saints were worshipped as images of gods and goddesses had formerly been, and the wood of the true cross, the bones of saints, and other relics came as much between the soul and God, as the things deemed sacred by heathenism had done for ages. When we consider the sweep which Muhammad made of pictures and images of every description, and of his uncompromising assertion that to God alone religious homage should be paid, we may rightly regard him as a reformer of great and crying abuses. The rebuke given to a corrupt Christianity was no small service. This rebuke has been given wherever Muhammadanism has obtained a footing. The severe simplicity of the Mosque, the utter absence of all material representations and symbols of God, forms a striking contrast to the gaudy furniture of the Church, where every thing is planned with a view to the gratification of the senses and of the imagination.

Muhammad's views of God were essentially defective, as we shall endeavour to show, but he has rendered no small service to the human family by having planned and stimulated that testimony to the futility of idols, and to the supremacy of the One True and Living God, which has been for ages rendered over a large part of the world.

One marked service which Muhammad rendered to Christianity was the testimony he gave to our Lord Jesus Christ.

According to the Qurán Jesus was the Messiah promised to the Jews. He was the Word of God, the Spirit of God, was miraculously born of the Virgin Mary, wrought many miracles, ascended at last to heaven, not however through the gate of death, (here the Qurán directly contradicts the New Testament,) and will come at last to destroy Anti-Christ. All shall at last believe in Him. On the day of resurrection he shall be a witness against the wicked, Sura 4th, from which some have inferred he will judge the world. The Muhammadan mind, working on the apocryphal stories regarding our Lord found in

Testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ,

the Qurán, has produced an utterly false ideal, but in the statements, which Muhammad has made, to which we have just referred, there is enough to put our Lord higher than any other who has appeared in human form. The Qurán gives no such testimony to any other. This testimony has secured among Muhammadans great reverence for our Lord. When a Jew is admitted to their number he must as the first step, profess his belief in Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. When the times of refreshing come to the followers of Muhammad, and the veil which has so long covered their minds is removed, the testimony given to Christ by the Qurán we may suppose will be invested with new meaning, and will aid in convincing them that to Him the highest honour, the warmest love, and the fullest service are due.

The early
services of
Muhammadan-
ism.

Muhammadanism at an early period of its career rendered services to civilization, to learning, to science, to commerce, to agriculture, and to the arts of life, with which every person aspiring to intelligence ought to be acquainted. After the first outburst of zeal, which overthrew the tottering rule of New Rome and of Persia throughout some of the richest and most populous countries of the world, in the lands thus subjugated by Islám a race of rulers arose remarkable for justice, intelligence, and public spirit. Those who know nothing of their achievements have yet to make acquaintance with some of the most interesting passages in the history of the world. We can give no details. All we can say is that several of these rulers, such as Hárún-al-Rashíd, Al Mámún, Abdul Rahmán, and Al Hakím made their power, wealth, and influence subservient to the material advancement, and the intellectual and moral improvement of mankind. In their days Baghdad, Granada, Cordova, and Cairo shed light far and wide. These Princes gathered around them the most distinguished men, Jews and Christians abounded in their Courts, and were treated with the most marked liberality, the sciences and arts were cultivated, books were collected and translated, navigation, commerce, and agriculture were encouraged. If Amrou the fanatical leader of the Musalmans destroyed the Library at Alexandria, which has been called in question, full amends were made by the magnificent structures erected for the reception of books, and

the vast number collected by the Kaliphs of Syria, Northern Africa, and Spain.*

The Reformation of religion in Europe was closely connected with the revival of learning, and that revival was in a great degree indebted to the Muhammadan Universities of Spain, where the lamp of knowledge was kept brightly burning, while Catholic Europe was covered with the gloom of ignorance. Persons thirsting for knowledge naturally betook themselves to Spain, where a copious fountain had been opened up, and Christians though they were, they received courteous and kindly treatment. These took back with them the knowledge they had imbibed for the refreshment of others. Friar Roger Bacon, who has been so often called the precursor of Lord Bacon, was undoubtedly indebted in a large degree to Spanish-Arabic writers for his remarkable attainments.

The enlightened rule and intellectual vigour of Islám it is well-known have long since sunk into decrepitude, we believe, from defects inherent in the system, but surely we should not withhold our meed of praise for services rendered by it to mankind, and indirectly to the Christian Church.

While acknowledging with pleasure all that was good in Muhammad and his teaching, and all the good which Muhammadanism has done in the world, we are thoroughly convinced that Muhammad was not the Apostle of God, and that Muhammadanism is the deterioration not the improvement of the religion of the Bible. We proceed to state our reasons for this conviction.

* We must not however suppose that under the most enlightened of these rulers their subjects enjoyed either religious or political freedom. Implicit and unquestioning obedience in both civil and sacred matters was demanded from all, and every assertion of freedom was put down with relentless severity. The fame of Hárún-al-Rashíd has gone forth to every part of the civilized world, as the most magnificent of monarchs, the beau idéal of a just and wise prince, and the great patron of learning; and yet his conduct was cruel and tyrannical to those who incurred his displeasure. His less known, and yet scarcely less distinguished son, Al Mámún, with all his liberality, visited with the severest penalties those who refused to extol Ali as the best of men, and to curse the very name of Muávia. The rule was often wise and enlightened, but still it was a despotism, and there was no security against individual caprice. The Indian Akbar gave perhaps more freedom to his subjects than any other Muhammadan ruler ever did, but he was not in any degree imbued with the spirit of the Qurán,

The discussion of all the points debated between Christians and Muhammadans would require a volume instead of an essay. We propose to give a mere glance at those questions, which have been fully treated on both sides, that we may give our chief attention to topics not so often discussed, but bearing more directly on the object we have in view.

The production and publication of the Qurán.

The Qurán, the Bible of the Muhammadans, it is well known, was not brought into the form of a volume by Muhammad himself. Its different portions were from time to time dictated to an amanuensis, and were written "on palm trees, leather, stones, or some other rude material as conveniently came to hand." They were recited to Muhammad's followers and companions, and the higher he rose in their esteem and reverence the more eager were they to listen to his pretended revelations, and to commit them to memory. We know not how the different parts were preserved, but it is certain that by the time of the Prophet's death no collection had been made. His successor, Abu Bakr, arranged for the fragments being edited, and sent forth in a book. Such was the reverence entertained for the Prophet that every effort was made to include only what could be traced to him. Within a few years such discrepancies were found between different copies, caused probably by copyists inserting with the Original what had been supplied by the memory of hearers, that under the Kaliph Othman a recension was made, the book was sent out in a corrected form, and the copies previously circulated were withdrawn. This with a few very slight verbal differences is the Qurán as it now exists. The chapters were put together without any regard to the order which either time or subject would suggest, and the difficulty to the reader who is bent on mastering it, which arises from its original desultoriness and diffuseness, is thus greatly increased. Notwithstanding the unsatisfactory way in which the book was given to the world, there can be no reasonable doubt that its substance was dictated by Muhammad, and if nothing more than its form could be alleged against it, it might be, though in an imperfect state, the record of a Divine Revelation.*

* The very defects of the Qurán are a proof of its substantial genuineness. "The patch-work bears no marks of a designing genius or a moulding hand."

Tradition tells us Muhammad was a great worker of miracles, but he himself made no such pretensions. He announced himself as a preacher, and pointed for his credentials to the excellence of his instructions, and the superiority of his style. As to the statements made about his splitting the moon, about his night journey to Jerusalem and to heaven, and about his wonderful escape from his enemies when fleeing from Mecca, we have only to say that those who regard these narratives as records of miracles are easily satisfied.

Claims
advanced
by and
for Mu-
hammad,

We are told that Muhammad could foretell future events, as proved by his statement regarding the conflict between the Romans and the Persians, as if men with any measure of capacity are not in the habit of expressing similar opinions, which the result often confirms.

It was confidently affirmed by Muhammad himself, and it is strongly held by his followers, that he was the subject of prophecy in both the Old and New Testaments. We are told that he was predicted under the name Ahmad, but the passage has not been discovered; that he was the prophet like unto Moses to be raised up from among his brethren, the children of Ishmael, Deuteronomy xviii, 15, though the same expression throughout that book is invariably applied to the children of Israel, Ch. xv, 7, Ch. xvii, 15, Ch. xxiv, 14; that according to Deuteronomy xxxiii, 2, there were to be three great prophets, Moses from Sinai, Christ from Seir, and Muhammad from Paran, but Christ had no connexion with Seir, nor Muhammad with Paran; that he was promised by Jesus to His disciples under the name Paraclytos, the Illustrious One, Paracletos, the Advocate or Comforter, the word used by our Saviour, and found in

It clearly testifies to the faith and reverence of the compilers, and proves that they dared not do more than simply collect the sacred fragments and put them in juxta position. Hence the interminable repetitions; the palling reiterations of the same ideas, the same truths, the same doctrines; hence the Scripture stories and Arab legends, told over and over again with little verbal alteration; hence the pervading want of connection, and the startling chasms between adjacent passages. Again, the confessions of Mahomet, and his frailties which it was sometimes expedient to represent as having been noticed by the Deity, are all with evident faithfulness entered in the Qurán. Not less undisturbed are the frequent verses, which are contradicted or abrogated by later revelations." Muir, Vol. 1st, Introduction, page xxii.

all versions, being put aside, as if apart from this Muhammad had a single quality of the One who was to dwell with Christ's people for ever; that he was to break the nations with a rod of iron, that passage in the second Psalm, and several other passages in the Scriptures, very notably in the nineteenth chapter of the book of Revelation, being manifestly applicable to our Saviour as Ruler and Judge. Even such a passage as Genesis xvii, 20, has been pressed into this service, the word 'Meod' 'exceedingly' being a distinct pre-intimation of Muhammad, containing as it does the leading letters of his name! We need not prosecute this subject further. In naming these supposed predictions, we have indicated our opinion of their relevancy.

The great argument for the Qurán advanced by Muhammad himself, and ever since reiterated by his followers is its excellence. He gloried in the name of 'Ummi' 'the Unlearned' Prophet. He challenged unbelievers to produce anything which could stand comparison with the instruction he imparted, and triumphantly pointed to its superiority as a proof that it was a Revelation from heaven. "If ye be in doubt concerning that revelation which we have sent down unto our servant, produce a chapter like unto it, and call upon your witnesses, besides God, if ye say truth. But if ye do not, nor shall ever be able to do it; justly fear the fire whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the unbelievers." Sura 2nd. "This Qurán could not have been composed by any except God; but it is a confirmation of that which was revealed before it, and an explanation of the Scripture; there is no doubt thereof; sent down from the Lord of all creatures." Sura 10th. On the very style of the Qurán much stress has been laid.* Arabian writers with few exceptions maintain it is so admirable, that it has never been equalled. This argument is little fitted to tell on those who judge of a revelation not by its style, but by its substance, who will not be pleased with the finest words, or the best turned sentences, if they do not contain truth fitted to satisfy their souls.

However admirable the style of the Qurán may be in the opinion of those who are familiar with the Arabic, it loses its charm in its transference to other languages. Among Non-

The alleged superiority of the Qurán to all human productions.

Muhammadan nations the Qurán has never been a favourite. The sentence passed on it by the Historian Gibbon has been often quoted—"an endless incoherent rhapsody of fable and precept and declamation, which sometimes crawls in the dust, and sometimes is lost in the clouds." Not a few will deem this sentence too severe, and yet many in their unsuccessful attempts to read the book have been ready to give it their assent. Sale's translation of the Qurán into English has been a well-known book for the last hundred and fifty years. It has been frequently reprinted. Every person possessed of a considerable library deems it his duty to put a copy of it on his shelves. It would be curious to know how many of those who have possessed the book for years have read through two or three of the longer chapters. We have known some who have made the attempt and given it up in despair. The translation into Urdú by Abdul Qádir is still more difficult for those who know that language, as it is extremely literal, and the words are written not in the Urdú but in the Arabic order. The exceedingly rhapsodical and diffuse style of the Qurán, and its want of order, are very trying to the reader, but his patience and charity are perhaps tried most of all by Muhammad's incessant reiteration of his Prophetic claims, and his fierce denunciation of all who reject them. One cannot but say to himself, 'Methinks, the gentleman protests too much.' Yet there are portions of the Qurán characterized by real eloquence, and the reader who loves sensational tales ought to be pleased with some of its stories.

The question has been often discussed. To what extent is the Qurán entitled to be regarded as an original production? It is certain that its materials were mainly derived from Jews and Christians, supplemented by traditions long prevalent among the Arabians. Much is taken directly from the Bible, specially from the Old Testament. The peculiar colouring given to the Bible narratives can be traced in most instances to the Talmud, the Apocryphal Gospels, and the forged writings palmed on distinguished Christian names. The farther investigation is carried into the sources of the Qurán, the more evident it becomes that to a large extent it is a compilation. A considerable measure of acquaintance is shown with the narrative portions of

The contents of the Qurán whence derived?

the Old Testament, and with the leading facts in the life of our Lord, but there is no indication of insight into the characteristic doctrines of either the Old or New Testament. There is no proof that these books as a whole were ever read to him. Many stories have been told about the help given to Muhammad by apostate Jews and Christians, and the names of these helpers have been given, but these stories are not sufficiently authenticated to entitle them to our belief. Muhammad is entitled to the credit of having impressed his own mind on the materials he possessed, and of having given them in a new form to the world, but there has been and will remain a great divergence of opinion regarding the extent and value of his literary power. It is certain that his oratorical power was great.

Its professed aim.

It is time for us to consider the teaching of the book for which Muhammad and his followers have advanced such high claims. That teaching professes to be the continuation and development of the supernatural Revelation, which God had given by the Prophets from age to age, and which he had latterly given by Jesus Christ, who is called His Word. The Pentateuch, the Psalms, the Prophets, and the New Testament are spoken of with profound reverence. It is indeed asserted that many of their rules have been abrogated, but their essential principles are represented as eternal. The Qurán then in order to establishing its claim to a Divine origin, in the first place, must accord with the Old and New Testaments in its representation of the past, and in its leading principles, and in the second place it must carry the revelation of God's character and will to a higher level than that which it reached under any previous dispensation.

The requirements of that aim.

1st.—If the Old and New Testaments be stamped with Divine authority, as the Qurán uniformly asserts, it is clear that every statement, which contradicts their teaching, should be rejected as false. The Qurán may put the lessons of the Bible in a clearer light, it may, on the subjects which the Bible treats, impart enlarged information, but on its own showing it must not contradict the Bible either in its narratives, or in its essential principles. If it does, it stands self-condemned.

2nd.—Something more however than agreement is necessary. If Christianity were nothing more than the republication of

Judaism, it would possess no value, and be utterly unnecessary. If it were to take us back to a lower level than Judaism, it would be positively hurtful. Islām then must not only prove its agreement with previous dispensations, but its marked superiority to them. If not superior it is uncalled for, and if inferior, it brings us back, instead of carrying us forward.

We proceed to ponder the first question, Does the Qurān agree with the Old and New Testaments?

We are here met by a preliminary question, Have we our Scriptures in their integrity? Can we depend on them as containing in an uncorrupt form the very writings of the Prophets and Apostles, whose names they bear? Christians maintain that the Scriptures we now have are the original writings in their integrity, an integrity which is not marred by the fact that slight verbal differences have arisen in the course of transcription, while Muhammadans maintain that they have been interpolated and corrupted with a view to the suppression of the testimony they give to their Prophet. For deciding this question we are not left to conjecture or fine-spun reasonings. We have facts to guide us, and if we follow them we cannot but arrive at the right conclusion.

The genuineness of the Old and New Testament.

In Sir Wm. Muir's "Testimony borne by the Coran to the Jewish and Christian Scriptures," we have a careful collection of all the passages in the Qurān, which bear on this subject. That testimony is very striking, and if Muhammadans would candidly consider it, we might expect the happiest results. Our Scriptures are uniformly referred to as a Revelation from above, and worthy of profound reverence. A great part of this testimony was given when Muhammad was bent on conciliating Jews and Christians. When opposed, thwarted, and rejected by them, he changed his tone, and assailed them with sharp and bitter words. He charged them with "concealing the testimony of God," and with wresting their Scriptures from their proper signification, but not a single instance of interpolation is mentioned. As however Muhammad was by no means particular or exact in his use of words, when abusing his enemies, we scarcely agree with the author of "The testimony borne by the Coran" when he says, "There is no where to be found throughout the Coran any imputation

The testimony of the Qurān to the Bible.

against the authority or genuineness of either the Old or New Testament." The passages adduced do not necessarily imply any such imputation, and no specific charge is advanced, but no forced meaning needs to be attached to some of Muhammad's words, to justify the inference, that he accuses Jews and Christians with interpolating their own writings. If he does, it can be maintained on the other hand, that he contradicts a testimony which in other passages he unequivocally gives. The Muhammadans have some show of reason in maintaining that their Prophet did make this charge. If they looked at the passages adduced as a whole, they would see much more reason for the opinion that in Muhammad's judgment our Scriptures then existed in their integrity, and that his only charge was against their perversion and concealment. Whether the charge was made or not, it can be proved to be unfounded.

The Muhammadan charge against the Bible.

Let us look at this accusation. It is that Jews and Christians, to excuse their unbelief in the Prophet of the latter age, excluded passages which referred to him, and inserted passages adverse to his claims, and that the Scriptures, thus interpolated and corrupted, are those which we have now in our possession. An assertion like this can be advanced only where gross ignorance of facts prevails.

The Futility of the charge.

In Muhammad's days the Old Testament in its original language was in the hands of both Jews and Christians, and the Greek translation called the Septuagint, made centuries before the Christian era, was very widely known. The New Testament in the Original and in translations was widely circulated among the nations. Well known and widely diffused translations of the New Testament into the Old Italian, the Syriac, and other languages, existed long before Muhammad's time. Even down to the present day there are manuscripts of the N. T. in the Original, such as that named the Codex Vaticanus, and the most precious recently discovered manuscript, called the Codex Sinaiticus, which bear incontestable proof of having been written many years previous to the era of the Hejira.

The Jews and Christians were fiercely opposed to each other, and it is inconceivable that they could unite all over the world

to corrupt a book like the Old Testament, deemed sacred by them all, in order to the overthrow of a common enemy. If a few individuals had wickedly and foolishly planned any such scheme, they would have been quickly exposed by the general voice of their communities. It is well known that Christians were divided into contending sects, and their contention with each other in Muhammad's days was so fierce, that Arabia was crowded with refugees from the persecution of their fellow-religionists. Was it possible that parties so divided, so hostile to each other, should unite in changing a book, held in reverence by them all, and appealed to by them all, and should so successfully carry out the design, that the Original itself in the thousands of copies which existed, and the translations used by people of different nations, along with the numerous quotations made by various authors, whose works have come down to us, should have been altered for a party purpose, with such skill, secrecy, and success, that not a trace of the change can be discovered either in the Book, or in history?

We are sure not a solitary passage could have been altered at that period. Long ere that time the Old and New Testaments had risen to a position, where they were secure from change, except that made by individual copyists, whose mistakes could be easily corrected by comparison with the work of others. Strange things have occurred in the world, but there has never been a parallel to the alteration of our Sacred Writings, alleged by Muhammadan controversialists. Many have been the vagaries of sceptical writers, but not one of them has maintained that at that period, or for a long time previously, our Scriptures were different from what they are at present. When Muhammadan writers press into their service the allegations of European Rationalists they pursue a suicidal course. They oppose the Qurán as much as the Bible. They are not merely maintaining that the Scriptures were corrupted in the days of Muhammad, which no rationalistic writer has ever asserted, but they declare that the Scriptures never did exist in their integrity, that they are a collection of spurious writings and legends, that they have no Divine authority, and that the Qurán, which professedly assumes their authority, authenticity, and genuineness is consequently false.

Taking our stand on the Qurán, and on the certain facts of history, are we not justified in saying that the alleged corruption of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures is a charge, the futility of which can be demonstrated? If we were contending with unbelievers among ourselves, we would maintain that no books in the world, of such ancient date, can appeal to such strong testimony for genuineness and authenticity, as the Old and New Testaments can. This testimony is presented in many books on the Christian Evidences.

Let us suppose a somewhat similar case. If after the days of Othman, when the last authorized version of the Qurán was sent forth, and copies of it had been multiplied in the different lands where Islam prevailed, any followers of the Prophet had planned to alter the book, to rebut the views of their fellow-religionists with whom they were at variance, or to silence Jewish and Christian opponents, could they have carried their plan into effect? Assuredly not. The book was too widely possessed, and was too highly valued by vast numbers, to make the realization of such a scheme practicable, however skilfully it might have been planned. If even successful in one country, a most unlikely supposition, it would have certainly failed in another. And yet Muhammadan controversialists maintain, that the scheme of corruption did succeed with the Old and New Testaments, though the parties possessing them were separated from each other by an impassable gulf, and though these Scriptures, including their translations, were far more widely circulated than the Qurán ever was!

The Qurán then, on its own showing, in its account of past transactions, and in its essential principles, must agree with the Bible, as we now have it. Is this agreement found?

The relation of the Qurán to the Bible.

The narratives of the Bible have to a considerable extent been transferred to the Qurán. We find much in it about the worthies of the Old Testament, and also about our Saviour Jesus Christ. The facts are sometimes narrated in entire accordance with the Bible, and every now and then in its very words. As a rule however, the narratives of the Bible in the hands of Muhammad obtain such a wild and legendary aspect, that their original simplicity, beauty, and veri-similitude are

destroyed. We might fill page after page with illustrations. A few must suffice.

Cain, we are told, was instructed by a raven sent by God to bury his brother, and he repented of his crime. Abraham broke the idols of Nimrod in pieces, except the largest, that they might lay the blame on it. When suspicion fell on him he said, 'Nay, but that biggest of them hath done it; ask them, if they can speak.' He was cast into a burning pile, but was not burnt, for God said, 'O fire, be thou cold.' Abraham divided the birds, which he had sacrificed, and put their parts on different mountains. He then called to them, and immediately they came to life. Abraham and Ishmael by Divine command cleansed the Kaaba, and Abraham prayed a Prophet might be sent to the Meccans. The birds and mountains sang God's praises along with David. Solomon possessed powers, of which the Bible gives us no intimation. The wind was under his control. Devils were compelled by his word to dive into the deep, and bring up pearls for him. His army consisted of genii, men, and birds, and he understood the language of them all. A prophet, supposed to be Ezekiel, raised many dead to life. Ezra and his ass were raised to life after they had been dead one hundred years. Our Lord's life, recorded in the Gospels, is given in the Qurán in the most meagre and general terms, but we have details to which the Evangelists have given no place, such as—He spoke in his mother's womb, and in the cradle. He made a bird of clay, breathed on it, and it became a living bird. He made a table with provisions to descend from heaven.

The Qurán abounds with such travesties of the Bible narratives. The legends of the Talmud and the Apocryphal Gospels, and the stories widely circulated in Arabia, are constantly preferred to the simple and truthful statements of the Scriptures, if indeed the Scriptures were known by Muhammad. Even when no direct contradiction can be alleged, the difference of tone is most perceptible. There is not however a mere difference of tone. There are palpable contradictions. Here again we must make a limited selection.

Satan's fall is represented as caused by his refusal to worship Adam at God's command, when the other angels obeyed,

Different
tone.

Palpable
contradiction.

that is, for refusing to render the creature the homage due to the Creator alone, a sin more frequently and sternly denounced in the Qurán than any other. The paradise, in which Adam and Eve were placed, and where they sinned, was in the seventh heavens, and from it they were cast down upon the earth. A wild story is told about Moses and Joshua setting out with a fish in a basket in quest of a personage possessed of marvellous knowledge, named Al-Khedr, and of spending many years (the word used is indefinite, but it means a long period, eighty years and upwards) in the search. The fish left the basket, and got into the water at a place where two seas met, said to be those of Persia and Greece, this being the appointed sign of Al-Khedr being at hand. What became of the children of Israel during this period, or how this can in any way be fitted into his life, we are not told. There is an account of Abraham making all preparation for the sacrifice of his son, according to the Divine command, and as the birth of Isaac is promised immediately afterwards, the Muhammadan commentators are unanimously of opinion that Ishmael, not Isaac, was the son, whom Abraham was ready to offer up. Ishmael is often represented as a Prophet, and the reader gets the impression that he is before Isaac in rank as well as age. We find him thus placed among the Patriarchs, 'Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob.' There is never a hint given that Isaac was the heir of the glorious promises given to Abraham, to which Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman, had no claim. No one acquainted with the Bible needs to be told, that such representations of Ishmael are a direct contradiction to its teaching.

We must give another instance of contradiction, the most notable of all, so far as the Scripture narrative is concerned—the denial of our Lord's crucifixion—Sura 4th. The words are most explicit. It is indeed inferred from other passages, that Muhammad taught Christ would die after His descent to the earth to kill Antichrist, but the Muhammadan commentators are agreed he did not die on the cross. The Evangelists tell us that He did, and minutely describe the circumstances of His cruel death. St. John says he saw the blood and water coming from His pierced side, the sure sign of death. The Apos-

cles in their writings not only assert again and again the fact of our Lord's death, but declare it to have been predicted by the Prophets, and set it forth as the offering up of the one sacrifice, which takes away sin. In the book of Revelation the most conspicuous and glorious object is Jesus Christ the slain Lamb. The Qurán, written centuries afterwards, and professing entire accordance with the New Testament, declares that Christ was never crucified, and consequently that all the teaching based on His death has a fiction for its foundation! A view propounded by some wild heretics is preferred to the uniform teaching of the New Testament. It would appear that Muhammad was so ignorant of the New Testament, that he thought he was doing the Christians a service in maintaining Christ was not crucified. The passage in which the crucifixion is most distinctly denied is one, in which the Jews are denounced for having spoken against Mary a grievous calumny. .

We need not wonder at Muhammad's contradiction of a fact attested by the Evangelists, and all important in Christian doctrine, when we consider the treatment our Lord receives throughout the Qurán. At the commencement of his career, when he was more hopeful of winning Jews and Christians than he could afterwards be, he spoke of our Lord's person and work in terms so high, that it is difficult to conceive one so honoured to be only a man, but when his claims to the Apostolate of God were rejected and opposed, in his resentment against Christians he did all in his power to bring down our Lord from His throne. He pronounced in the strongest terms against His Sonship and Divinity. He allowed Him to have been a great and distinguished Prophet, very excellent in character, and highly endowed for His public work, both as a teacher and a worker of miracles, but he maintained that His era as a Prophet had come to an end. The world required a new Revelation, and Muhammad, not Christ, was the Prophet of the new Dispensation. Muhammad was now and for ages to come to be the great inspired teacher of mankind. We need not wonder at any contradiction of the Bible, which we may find in the Qurán, when we find it propounding and vehemently asserting views of our Saviour directly opposed to the New

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mad's de-
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nity.

Testament from beginning to end, and also opposed to the predictions in the Old Testament, which are fulfilled in Him alone. *None but Christ* we may call the motto of the Apostles. With what indignation would they have rejected the assertion, that another was to arise, who would supersede their Master in any one of His offices, and to whose Prophetic guidance men should give themselves in preference to Him! Rejecting and even scorning the New Testament teaching about our Lord, we need not be surprised to find Muhammad opposing all the leading principles of both the Old and New Testaments, as we shall presently show. With such a disagreement in the essence of its teaching, it is needless to dwell on the contradiction of Scripture facts found in the Qurán.

Here it may be well for us to halt, that we may mark our position.

Summary. We observed that the Qurán in strong terms accredited the writings of the Old and New Testaments. The least then that we can demand of it is, that in its recital of facts, and in its essential principles, it agree with the books, which itself declares to be the record of a Divine Revelation.

The Qurán antagonistic to the Bible.

The followers of Muhammad declare that the Scriptures of the Jews and Christians have been corrupted, that some passages have been altered, some erased, and others added, thus breaking the agreement with the Qurán, which would otherwise be found. We have shown how utterly groundless the charge is, but even if it could be proved, and the text restored in its integrity, we should still be separated from the necessary agreement by an insuperable gulf. We have shown that not only in reference to individual facts, but still more in reference to the doctrine of the New Testament regarding our Lord's person and work, a doctrine which pervades it, and gives a peculiar tinge to all its lessons, the Qurán is at irreconcilable variance. To bring about an agreement the New Testament would need not a mere alteration, but a transformation into something entirely different from what it is. A solitary chapter unchanged would arise to condemn the rest. Even the * Musalmans themselves do not contend that our Scriptures are so corrupted, that we must transform them, or rather cast them away altogether, and put books of an entirely different

order in their place, but nothing short of this would secure agreement with the Qurán. To those who will candidly look at facts the conclusion is plain—that the Qurán is in direct antagonism to books, which by its own showing have the stamp of God's authority.

We have observed that something more than agreement is required. A new Revelation must be in advance of all that preceded. There is progress in all God's works, and this must surely appear in the lessons He gives to mankind. Is the Qurán then in advance of the Bible, especially of the New Testament? We have seen it to be different. We now inquire, Is it superior? This question can be answered only by our looking, at the peculiarities of both Christianity and Muhammadanism, as set forth in their sacred books.

I.—*Let us consider the representations of God's character found in the Bible and Qurán.*

In the Qurán the unity of God is affirmed in the clearest and most decisive terms. He is declared to be the Creator, the Preserver, and the Governor of the universe. His power and sovereignty are extolled in the loftiest terms. "God! there is no God but He; the living, the self-subsisting; neither slumber nor sleep seizeth Him: to Him belongeth whatsoever is in heaven, and on earth. * * His throne is extended over heaven and earth, and the preservation of both is no burden to Him."—Sura 2nd. This passage has been greatly admired, and many similar passages are found. Every claim of union with God as the object of reverence, worship, and service, is denounced. The wickedness and futility of idol-worship in every form are emphatically declared. Pantheism, that widely-spread and seductive, but false and hurtful error, receives no countenance, though in the extreme views given of predestination and reprobation, there is a dangerous approach to some of its worst consequences. Naturalism is abjured. God is represented as from age to age interposing by supernatural modes for the instruction and deliverance of man.

To such views of God the Christian gives his hearty assent. He does not however believe that on this very important subject the Qurán is in advance of the Bible. On the contrary he maintains that with the Bible the superiority lies,

If not agreement, is there superiority?

I.—God's character as represented in the Bible and Qurán.

In the Qurán the sovereignty of God has the most prominent place. He is set forth as the almighty, irresistible Ruler, whose will is unrestrained, whose pleasure none can successfully oppose. His righteousness and mercy are not infrequently mentioned, every chapter (Sura) indeed begins with, 'In the name of the Most Merciful,' but His power and majesty are most impressively exhibited, while His moral qualities are kept comparatively in the back-ground. In the Divine actings described in the Qurán, we are much more impressed with God's doing everything by His sovereign will, than by His regard to His righteous, holy, and loving purposes. We do not see the pervasive influence of the highest excellence. Ought we not to trace to this one-sided view of God's sovereignty the preference continually shown to the Talmudic and Legendary version of Bible narratives? What a readiness is shown to accept every marvellous story! Where, for instance, in the Bible, do we find a story like that of the seven Christian youths of Ephesus, who in a time of persecution betook themselves to a cave with their dog, had there, as they thought, a refreshing sleep, and on awaking ventured into the city, where to their astonishment everything was changed, and no wonder for they had slept three hundred and nine years! In the Qurán miracles are rarely set forth as 'signs' of God's character, and of His wise and holy purposes, which they continually are in the Scriptures. They mainly appear as 'wonders,' such as might be expected to be shown by a great capricious sovereign, whom no one dare call to account.

The Bible dwells on God not merely as the Sovereign of the world, but as its moral Sovereign. We have not the mere declaration of His attributes in lofty terms, but we see Him in His entire dealings towards His intelligent creatures promoting moral ends. We are not allowed to regard His sovereignty apart from His inflexible righteousness, spotless holiness, and boundless love. This view of God's moral government is inculcated in the most effective way, not so much by assertion, as by the narration of those dealings towards the human race, by which His excellence is manifested.

As might be expected from the prominence given to God's

Sovereignty in the Qurán, His Fatherhood is scarcely ever recognised. The love to Him which is commanded is love to a King, and not to a Father. In the Bible on the other hand God is continually set forth as the Father of His intelligent creatures, to be loved as well as revered and obeyed, to whom they may be most closely united, with whom they may have the most loving communion, and who may be their everlasting portion.

It is in this connexion we see the value of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. At first sight it might appear that the doctrine of the Divine unity was compromised by the doctrine of the Trinity, and that the Qurán has an advantage over the Bible by its insisting so much as it does on God being One, as the One without-a-companion. The Musalmans glory in this doctrine of the Divine unity, and so-called Rationalistic Christians have often on this ground claimed relationship to them. On full consideration the advantage is seen to be a disadvantage. If the doctrine of the Qurán gives some relief to the understanding, it does it at the expense of the conscience and the heart. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity, as revealed in the Bible, is set forth, not for the purpose of initiating us into the mysteries of the Divine nature, which are far beyond our comprehension, but for the purpose of manifesting to us the wondrous modes which God has in His infinite wisdom adopted for the pardon of our sins, and the renewal of our nature, in perfect consistency with the righteousness of His government, and the vindication of His law. The doctrine is not even once set forth in a technical and speculative form. We read of the Father sending His Son into the world, we read of the Son accomplishing the object of His Mission, and of the Spirit taking of the things which are Christ's, and renewing and sanctifying the soul. In these varied operations we are taught to see the One ever blessed God. Thus presented, the doctrine is felt to be bound up with the moral government of the world, and by the realization of the moral qualities of the Godhead, to which it enables the human mind to rise, it has had and continues to have a most commanding influence. It is no mysterious dogma, strange to the understanding, and unfitted to tell on

the character and life. It is at once a vital and vitalizing truth. The Qurán pronounces strongly against the doctrine of the Trinity, because its views of God require no such manifestation of His moral attributes as the doctrine supplies.*

The Qurán, in its sensational stories, in the rites it enjoins, in the license it affords, in the torments it declares to be prepared for unbelievers, and in the joys of promises to the faithful, in the pride it tends to engender, has much to please the human heart, and to control human character, but the unity of God taught in its nakedness, is as inoperative for religious purposes, as any doctrine ever professed by man. Those in Christian lands, who boast of being Unitarians, are often intelligent, amiable, and benevolent, subtle in thought, high in speculation, but even on their own showing more destitute of religious life and zeal than any other class of religionists. If mere Unitarianism, either Muhammadan or so-called Christian, be tried by the test, 'By their fruits ye shall know them,' it must be declared fatally wanting.

II.—The Bible and Qurán representations of man.

II.—*Let us compare the Bible and Qurán representations of man.*

We have in the Qurán, as we have seen, though in a very different form, an account of man's temptation, and his expulsion from Paradise. There it is given very much as a tale, and its dire influence on man's character and state, if subsequently indicated, receives no prominence. Man is indeed seen to have a deteriorated character, and to be exposed to many sufferings, but no distinct statement is given about the utter depravation of man's nature, and his contraction of the darkest guilt. We find no clear teaching in the Qurán either as to man's original greatness, as created to love, serve, and enjoy God, or of the depth of wickedness and guilt into which

* By implication there is much in the Qurán opposed to the doctrine of the Trinity, and in two passages it is expressly condemned, and at the same time entirely misrepresented—"Believe in God and his apostles, and say not 'There are three Gods:' forbear this; it will be better for you."—Sura 4th. "There are certainly infidels, who say, 'God is the third of three;' but there is no God, besides one God."—Sura 5th. Most Muhammadan commentators are of opinion that these passages are immediately directed against a Trinity composed of God, Jesus, and Mary, a notion held by an obscure Christian sect, while they also condemn the doctrine of the Trinity, as held by orthodox Christians,

sin has dragged him. We read indeed of repentance and the pardon of sin, but no instruction is given about the renewal of man's nature.

How different and how superior too is the teaching of the Bible on this subject! There we are taught that man was made in God's image, and admitted to close intimacy with Him. By the fall that image was fearfully blurred, and human beings were born under a new condition. Adam was created in God's image, but of Adam it is said that he begat a son in his own likeness, after his image, ~~we~~ being left to infer that this son was not born after the image of God. As we advance in the Bible we have set before us the depravation of man's character, and the dark sins with which he is chargeable are traced to his apostacy from the Most High, and the consequent ruin of his moral nature. What then does man need? He needs the pardon of his sins, and on this subject the Qurán agrees with the Bible, but he needs much more, and here the Bible leaves the Qurán far behind. He needs the enlightening of his understanding, the purifying of his heart, the pacifying of his conscience, the fixed direction of the whole soul heaven-ward. In the most varied forms, and in the most impressive manner, this great blessing of a new heart and of a right spirit is set forth in the Bible, as that which man needs above everything else, and as that which God is most ready to impart. This renewed nature is represented as the spring of all acceptable obedience, and the source of all true happiness. Here a foundation is laid for a lofty morality unknown to the Qurán. There indeed, there are a few passages taken from the Bible, which imply that a radical change of character is required, but these have no vital connexion with the system propounded in the book, and might have been omitted without any deduction being made from its general teaching.

We are now prepared to observe

III.—*The contrast between the self-righteousness of the Qurán, and the grace of the Bible.*

The Qurán in the most varied and emphatic manner calls on man to be the framer of his own righteousness, and the worker out of his own salvation. The discharge of social duty, the fulfilling of engagements, the practice of truth, honesty, etc.

III.—The self-righteousness of the Qurán, and the grace of the Bible.

and kindness, alms-giving, prayer, ablution, fasting, pilgrimage—these and similar things are set forth not merely as required by God's command, and in themselves fit and right, but as the certain means of securing an entrance into heaven. "He who shall appear with good works shall receive a ten-fold recompense for the same; but he who shall appear with evil works shall receive only an equal punishment for the same." "If ye make your alms to appear, it is well; but if ye conceal them, and give them unto the poor, this will be better for you, and will atone for your sins: and God is well informed of that which ye do." "Verily they who give alms out of what we have bestowed on them, both in secret and openly, hope for a merchandize, which shall not perish." "O true believers, give alms of that which we have bestowed on you before the day cometh wherein there shall be no merchandizing, nor friendship, nor intercession." "They whose balances shall be heavy with good works, shall be happy: but they whose balances shall be light, are those who shall lose their souls, and shall remain in hell for ever." Passages like these occur in every part of the Qurán. Much is said about the balance in which men are to be weighed, and on this topic the Muhammadan Doctors have largely discoursed. Even true believers often do what is wrong as well as what is right, but God's mercy will be thrown into the scale, and thus if our life has been tolerably good, the balance will be made to incline in our favour. If only we believe in God and His prophet, give alms, pray at the prescribed times, and pay attention to our religious duties, we may depend on lenient treatment. Fighting for the faith is specially meritorious. Death met in this cause carries the martyr straight to Paradise. If our limits permitted, numerous passages illustrative of this might be quoted from Suras 2, 3, 9, 47, 61, and others.

This dependence of man on himself, with God's mercy to come in to enhance his good deeds, and obliterate the bad, is a prominent and all-pervading doctrine of the Qurán. Musalmans glory in it, as at once honouring to God, and beneficial to men.

No one even slightly acquainted with the Bible needs to be told that the doctrine of the Bible is entirely different.

Grace, free unmerited favour to man, at once providing for the pardon of sin and the renewal of the heart, coming forth to bless man in spite of his deep demerits, and utterly denying his possession of any merit, is its grand and glorious theme. Every one who gives himself up to the teaching of the Bible is prepared to welcome this doctrine of grace by the views it presents of God's character, government, and law. God is seen to be so righteous, His law so holy, its requirements so just and reasonable, its violation so wicked, its violators so helpless, and the vindication of God's righteousness so necessary, that grace alone can furnish any hope of deliverance. This deliverance for man, secured neither wholly nor in part by man's efforts, but provided for us entirely by God's goodness through His Son, is unfolded with increasing clearness in the successive portions of the Old Testament, and comes out with noon-day lustre in the New Testament. We are indeed taught that man is to be judged by his works, but in close connexion with this we are taught that the one ground of acceptance with God is the work of One infinitely higher than ourselves, and the only satisfactory proof of our acceptance is a faith, which shows its reality by corresponding deeds. If we were to quote the passages, which either directly or indirectly affirm the doctrine of grace, we should have to transcribe a large part of our Scriptures. The Apostle Paul has often been said to be its great champion, but those who think he stands well-nigh alone, or is only feebly supported by the other sacred writers, have read their Bible to little purpose. The doctrine is diffused throughout the Book, and is met every where, though in some portions it obtains fuller and more formal expression than in others.

The doctrine of man's ability to save himself by his good deeds, with a little help from God's mercy, is by no means confined to Muhammadans. It is firmly held by many professing Christians, and is indeed welcome every where to the unrenowned mind. Man, when unchanged, has feeble impressions of God's character and government, and of the demerit of sin. He thinks he can do something to merit heaven, and if his services be not thus brought into account, he perceives no motive for rendering them at all. The doctrine of salva-



tion by grace alone is mysterious and repulsive. However great may be the prejudice of professing Christians against Muhammad, and however ready they may be to call him a base impostor, unconsciously many of them agree on this great subject with his teaching, much more than they do with the teaching of Him whom they call Lord and Saviour. They with Musalmans think the doctrine of salvation by grace alone tends to the paralysis of good works. When however men rise to the true knowledge of God, when they apprehend in a measure how just, holy, and good He is, when they see the demerit and vileness of sin, and their own utter inability to save themselves, there is not a doctrine in the Bible, which they more highly prize, and on which they more clearly perceive the seal of heaven. Goodness, instead of being paralyzed, flourishes in the degree in which grace sways the soul. Excellence then appears most attractive, and the soul, free from its fetters, impelled by love to Him who has redeemed it, and depending on His guidance, presses forward in the pursuit of everything which is good, with an eagerness, an alacrity, and a success, which must be unknown by the poor fettered burdened soul, which is struggling to achieve its own salvation. Muhammad boasted of being a descendant of Ishmael. He and all who trust in their own works are the children of the bondwoman, while those who trust in God's grace alone are the children of the free.

IV.—The doctrine of sacrifice in the Bible and Qurán.

IV.—*We may now perceive why the doctrine of sacrifice has so commanding a place in the Bible, while in the Qurán no importance is attached to it.*

The Bible, if we may so speak, is saturated with sacrificial teaching. From the beginning to the end we are never out of sight of the altar and the offering. We find the rite of sacrifice observed immediately after the expulsion of our first parents from Paradise. We see the Patriarchs erecting their altars, wherever they pitched their tents. No sooner were the Israelites constituted into a distinct nation and Church than a whole tribe was set apart for the performance of Priestly acts, and to these most minute instructions were given, as to the animals fit for sacrifice, the modes in which they were to be offered, and the seasons when God was to be thus approached.

For ages by Divine command these sacrificial services were rendered. The writings of the Prophets abound with allusions to them. When we come to the New Testament, we are taught by our Lord and His Apostles that these sacrifices received their accomplishment in His sacrifice of Himself on the cross, and had been ordained for the very purpose of explaining the nature, and sustaining the hope of that one all-efficacious propitiatory offering.

The Israelites did not stand alone in the importance they attached to propitiatory sacrifices. In successive ages, among the most diverse nations, the rite of sacrifice has been observed. Men have been unable to furnish a rational solution, their explanations of the rite have been obscure and confused, and yet in it there must be something which comes home to man's heart, and is adapted to his need. Mere custom and tradition would not have given it the prevalence it has obtained.

Muhammad professed to come in the wake of Moses and Jesus to carry on and complete their work. If his claim be well founded, his views of sacrifice must accord with theirs. Do they accord? So far are they from being accordant that they are directly antagonistic. In the Qurán, the relation of sacrifice to God's justice and man's forgiveness is never indicated. Not a glimpse is given of the one sacrifice, which according to the New Testament takes away sin. We are never told that 'Without the shedding of blood there is no remission,' and that 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin.' Christ as the Saviour is throughout ignored. According to the Qurán, sacrifice is simply an ancient and becoming mode of doing homage to God. If it cannot be said to be an excrecence of the religious system taught by Muhammad, it certainly forms no essential part of it. It might be omitted without any detriment to his teaching. The more indeed we read the Qurán, the more we are impressed with the thought, that Muhammad had not even an intellectual apprehension of Christ's sacrifice, and of the distinctive doctrines bound up with it. If this ignorance lessen his guilt, it also lessens his authority as a religious teacher.

In confirmation of the statement just made we quote the most

explicit passage on the subject, which we have found in the Qurán. "Whoso maketh valuable offerings unto God; verily they proceed from the piety of men's hearts. Ye receive various advantages from the cattle designed for sacrifices, until a determined time for slaying them, then the place of sacrificing them is at the ancient house (*i. e.* the Kaaba in Mecca.) Unto the professors of every religion have we appointed certain rites, that they may commemorate the name of God on slaying the brute cattle which he hath provided for them. Your God is one God: wherefore resign yourselves wholly unto him. * * The camels slain for sacrifice have we appointed for you as symbols of your obedience unto God: ye also receive other advantages from them. Wherefore commemorate the name of God over them, when ye slay them, standing on their feet, disposed in right order; and when they are fallen down dead, eat of them: and give to eat thereof, both to him who is content with what is given him, without asking, and unto him who asketh. Thus have we given you dominion over them, that ye might return us thanks. Their flesh is not accepted of God, neither their blood; but your piety is accepted of him."—Sura 22.

This reducing of the doctrine of sacrifice to utter insignificance is the necessary result of the views regarding God's character and government advanced in the Qurán. God as a sovereign may do what He pleases. He is mercifully inclined, and pardons whom He wills. In this world rulers must uphold the law by condemning violations of it, but God's government requires no such vindication. None can call Him to account, and His justice demands no satisfaction. Men can perform a sufficient number of good deeds to merit His favour, and God's mercy will pardon their deficiencies and offences. There is thus no place for a propitiatory sacrifice. According to this view, the sacrifices of the Mosaic dispensation were unmeaning and unnecessary, and the sacrifice of the cross, on which Christians depend for salvation, is a foolish imagination!

The antagonism between the two systems on this subject is very marked. On what side is the truth? Let us only know God and ourselves, and we shall see abundant reason for rejecting this so-called improvement and completion of Christianity.

V.—*The connexion with Muhammad's doctrine of good works, he minutely prescribed the manner in which God was to be worshipped, and attached high merit to the rites enjoined, thus presenting a marked contrast to the course pursued by our Lord and his Apostles.*

V.—The externality of Muhammadanism, and the spirituality of Christianity.

Christians firmly believe there is no antagonism between Judaism and Christianity, but the outward distinction is so marked as to strike the most superficial observer. This distinction is caused by the fact that in the one dispensation we have preparation, and in the other completion; that the one is full of a Saviour to come, and of a salvation to be wrought out, while the other is full of a Saviour who has come, and of a salvation secured. By the coming of the Messiah the Church has been raised to a new position, enjoys new privileges, and is charged with new responsibilities. It has grown out of its childhood, and needs no longer the minute instructions, and the pictorial lessons suited to its nonage. By reaching manhood it has become fit for the rule of great principles, and general instructions, under the guidance of God's Spirit. Hence, while in the Old Testament God's worship is minutely prescribed, and impressive outward rites are enjoined, the New Testament is silent as to ritual, with the exception of the command it contains to administer baptism, and to observe the Lord's Supper. For maintaining the spirit and practice of prayer we have set before us the clearest lessons, the most powerful motives, and the highest examples, but we are left to our spiritual discretion to determine the time, the mode, and the posture of prayer. The duty of public worship is inculcated by direct precept, and the example of the primitive Christians under Divine guidance, but the mode of public worship is no where enjoined. We are continually reminded of the great facts, on which our faith rests, such as the incarnation, the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord, but we search in vain for any command to set apart days for the commemoration of these facts. The great principles of Church government are we believe not obscurely asserted in the New Testament, and these principles are of great importance to the attainment of the true ends of the Christian Church—the conservation of the truth, the edifica-

tion of believers, the conversion of sinners, the liberty essential to spiritual development, combined with the order requisite to harmonious and effective co-operation, all being made subservient to the glory of God,—but no rules are laid down analogous to those by which the Church of Israel was constituted. We have no doubt as to the obligation under which we are laid to keep sacred the Lord's Day, but even here, where the interests of true religion are vitally concerned, we have no statutes resembling those by which the seventh day of the week was consecrated of old. The instruction given to Gentile Christians, Acts 15th Ch., is no exception to the spirit of the New Testament, for it is evident from the occasion on which it was given, and from the fact of no allusion to it in the Apostolic Epistles, it was simply intended to meet a special emergency. How far Christian Churches are authorized or justified in imposing a ritual on their members, and appointing services unnamed in the New Testament, is a question with which in this Essay we have nothing to do. Those who contend most earnestly for the propriety, and indeed the necessity of ritualistic services, can scarcely object to the statement we have made about the silence of the New Testament, as the fact is so obvious it cannot be gainsaid. Nothing can appear more simple and free than the worship of the Apostolic Church, when we confine ourselves to the information imparted by the New Testament.

The Qurán professes to be a Revelation in advance of the New Testament, and what do we find in it? The worshipper is no longer left to great principles, and general guidance. He is minutely instructed as to the times, modes, posture of prayer, the seasons and modes of ablution, fasting, pilgrimage, days of commemoration, lawful and unlawful food, and similar things.

Is this an advance or a retrogression? If it be an advance, it is clear that we have been vainly boasting of the spirituality and simplicity of Christianity, and that we have reason to look back with wistful eyes to the Judaism which it has displaced. In that case the leading strings and prescribed lessons of childhood are superior to the freedom and the responsibility of manhood. We must confess that professed Christians

have too often shown that the externality of Judaism has been much more congenial to them than the spirituality of Christianity, and have thereby unconsciously declared that Muhammad was justified in the minute instructions he laid down, but we are sure the Apostle Paul would say of all such improvements what he said to the Galatians, "Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"

Minute instructions as to worship do not necessarily minister to self-righteousness. Judaism as ordained by God was intended to tear up self-righteousness by the root. Still, there is no doubt numerous and minute outward services can be easily turned to a self-righteous account, and when we look at the entire spirit of Muhammad's teaching, we cannot doubt he had this object in view. One who is working out his own righteousness, notwithstanding his partiality to himself, is often disconcerted, as he is forced to perceive the defects of his good deeds, and it is very convenient to have a routine of religious acts, by the observance of which he can add to his store of merit. He easily slides into the notion that these rites stand highest in the estimation of heaven, and to them he consequently pays the most punctilious attention. In the Qurán there are warnings against the mechanical and heartless performance of religious services, and the practice of virtue and kindness is strictly enjoined, but not a doubt can be entertained, that the proud self-righteous spirit of Moslems has been greatly fostered by the merit which Muhammad attached to outward rites.

While these services have done much to foster self-righteousness, they have done little towards the formation of a righteous character. They have been regarded not so much as means towards personal excellence, as a substitute for it. For instance the utmost importance has been attached to prayer. In the Qurán it has a very prominent place. The Kaliph Omar spoke as a thorough Musalman when he said, "Prayer carries us half-way to God, fasting brings us to the door of His palace, and alms procure us admission." But how mechanically is prayer discharged! Notwithstanding some spiritual passages on this subject in the Qurán, its minute instructions

have ever tended to turn men into praying *automata*, while the teaching of the Bible has ever tended to foster the true devoutness, which produces all goodness, because it brings the soul near to the fountain of goodness.

VI.—The
Theocracy
of Mu-
hammad-
anism,
and the
free spirit
of Chris-
tianity.

VI.—*Muhammad not only gave minute religious ordinances to his disciples, but established over them a civil government, in which he himself was under God at once their law-giver, judge, and King.* Here too the system he established presents

a marked contrast to that set up by Christ and His Apostles. The Jews lived under a Theocracy. God Himself was their King. Through Moses, and afterwards through the Prophets, He made known His will to them, and through the Judges, and their successors the Kings, He administered and executed His law, so far as these rulers rose to the dignity of their position as His Vicegerents. This system was adapted to a single nation separated from all other nations for a special purpose, and it necessarily ceased, when that purpose was accomplished.

The Jews, misled by their worldly minds, supposed the Messiah was to be their Theocratic King, and that He would invest His rule with a glory, which would dim the splendour of David, and their most distinguished princes. They could not recognize the Messiah in the lowly Jesus. He refused to be made such a King as they wished Him to be. He would not be their judge or law-giver. They could not even elicit from Him an expression of political opinion. His kingdom was not of this world, but in laying down the principles of His spiritual kingdom, He taught great truths, and propounded great lessons, fitted to purify and elevate all the kingdoms of the earth. His Apostles followed in His steps. They too inculcated the justice, mercy, consideration, and wisdom, the exercise of which would sweeten and elevate all human institutions, but they scrupulously abstained from interfering with political schemes.

Thus in reference to politics and social life, as well as in reference to religion, man is called on to act a manly part. Christian nations are left to adopt the political institutions they deem best, provided that the great end of government, the good of the governed, be secured. The requirements of

the New Testament are met, when all just claims are upheld, all classes protected, justice firmly and yet considerably administered, liberty guarded, so that full scope is given for all legitimate pursuits, while order is maintained, and law is honoured. All engaged in administering such a government are entitled to look above for God's blessing. Under such a government, conscience is held sacred. Subjects are responsible to God alone for their religious belief and practices, and rulers, enlightened by the New Testament, perceive they have no right to interfere, except when practices, called religious, interfere with the order of society. Let only the nations of the earth come under the power of Christian principle, and they will be impelled to a course of indefinite improvement, in pursuing which they will rise to an excellence and happiness hitherto unknown on earth.

Here again we see Muhammad going back to Judaism. He legislated for the guardianship of orphans, marriage, divorce, evidence, wills, and many similar things. In his own person he set up a Theocracy, and the Kaliphs his successors have looked on themselves as his Lieutenants, bound to administer the laws of the dispensation which he introduced. If we were to allow all that Muhammadans have said in praise of the code of Islám, we should still say, that the nations bound by it are under a great disadvantage compared with Christian nations. They are not allowed to adopt those changes in the laws, which new circumstances and more enlightened views may demand. There can be neither civil nor religious liberty under the Muhammadan ruler, who looking on himself as the administrator of a Divinely given code, as at once the spiritual and secular head of his people, is entitled to judge all causes civil and religious, which arise within his domains. Security of person and property, under degrading conditions, may be accorded to hereditary Jews and Christians, but the political equality of different religionists is directly opposed to the letter and spirit of Islám. Religious freedom is sternly denied. The so-called apostate to Christianity is doomed to death, even if he had been born a Christian, and had become a Musalman. "And if they turn back, take them and kill them wherever you find them."—Sura 1th. Without liberty

no state can grow, and it is only where Muhammadan law is laid aside, a Muhammadan nation can make steady and assured progress. For confirmation of this opinion we need only read the history of Muhammadan kingdoms, and see their state at the present day. The laws given to the Jews were well adapted to them, but their imposition on us would be an intolerable burden, and an effectual obstacle to true advancement.

If Muhammad had legislated for the Arabians alone, and had based his code on its adaptation to them, without claiming for it a Divine sanction, he might have done excellent service, though even in that case we believe that the true verdict would be the code was too accordant with the barbarous character and customs of the people to exercise over them a commanding influence for good, but as he declares it to have come from God, and commands men to obey it as Divine, it assumes quite * a different aspect. It was soon found by his followers to be insufficient for their purposes, and large additions were made to it, but these additions are declared to be in entire harmony with it, and to have indeed the Prophet's sanction handed down by tradition.

Regarding slavery we can only say, that while the condition of slaves was greatly improved by the prevalence of Muhammadanism, and some very humane regulations were promulgated regarding their treatment, the fact remains, and the reasons for the fact are we believe not far to seek, there has never sprung up in any Muhammadan community that heart-hatred of slavery, which has increasingly become a marked characteristic of Christ's followers, in proportion to the degree in which they have imbibed His spirit. The zeal shown, and the sacrifices made, for the abolition of the accursed system, by the Christians of this century, to say nothing of former times, form a marked contrast to its approval and active support by Muhammadans during the same period.

VII.—Domestic purity and family life.

VII.—We now come to a more important subject than political government, important though it be. *We proceed to consider the influence of the Qurán on domestic purity, and the family life, compared with the influence of the New Testament.*

The subject itself is a very delicate one. Its nature forbids our giving the details necessary for the full elucidation of our

views, and its bearings on the character of individuals and nations are so varied, that it is impossible to do it justice within our limited space. We can do nothing more than furnish an outline of the thoughts which the theme suggests.

It will be allowed by all that personal excellence is most precious in itself, and is the only true security for social prosperity and political advancement. The individual is the base of the state, and the excellence of the individual is the strength of that base. Everything ought to be encouraged which promotes individual worth, and everything ought to be opposed, which is inimical to that worth.

Individual worth cannot be secured by isolation. From the first it was declared it was not good for man to be alone. He was evidently intended for society. God made man male and female, and by their difference from, and yet their likeness to each other, they were fitted and intended for each other's companionship. On their relationship to each other depended the excellence, as much as the continuance of the human race. Nothing could be more improving than their right relationship, and nothing could be more depraving than the abuse of that relationship.

The Bible tells us that God at first made one man and one woman, and that He ordained they should enter into a permanent union for life. This first marriage is represented as the model for all future marriages. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." To man a vastly higher place was assigned than to any other creature in this world, and by the institution of marriage, as well as by other modes, his superiority was declared. For mere animals no such arrangement was made, as they had no intellectual and moral wants to be supplied. For man to give up this institution is to descend to the level of the brutes.

The teaching of the Bible

Much has been said and sung in praise of marriage, and the family home, and not too much. It is needless for us to reiterate its praises. What invaluable lessons have been learned in the school of the family! What virtues have grown in that garden! What vigorous plants for the Church and the State have been reared in that nursery! What excellencies

have been invigorated and what evils have been subdued, in that gymnasium! What joys have been experienced in that retreat! The very trials, struggles, and sorrows of family life have been among the most signal means for purifying, strengthening, and elevating human beings. They have given a robustness, a gentleness, and a mellowness to the character, which would have been otherwise unknown. The fundamental principle of marriage being the union of two persons of different sexes so that they become one flesh, by the admission of another the principle is violated, and the charm of the marriage union is dissolved.

Marriage has come from Paradise, but man by his sinfulness, taints every thing which he touches, and the institution no longer retains its pristine innocence. Often it has been turned into a curse, and the original law has been violated in many and daring forms. Still the institution has survived the unutterable wickedness, which has marked the history of man, and exists to the present day, as one of the world's choicest blessings.

Owing to the hardness of men's hearts, as our Lord teaches us, polygamy was permitted though not sanctioned in the ages preceding His appearance. The license of the nations surrounding the Israelites was condemned, but for wise reasons, of which we are in a position to form a very imperfect conception, the restraint of the original rule was not in every case enforced.

By the coming of our Lord, life in all its departments was raised to a higher platform. Our Lord re-announced and re-affirmed the original law. Matthew xix, 3—7. He condemned every thought which tended to the violation of the law. He stamped with reprobation the lustful eye as well as the lustful deed. Matthew v, 28. The institution of marriage was thus restored to its original purity.

We cannot infer from the New Testament that polygamists were refused admission into the Church till they had dismissed all their wives except one, but it was well understood that polygamy was an evil, which should be discouraged and repressed to the utmost. So far were the leaders of the Church from obtaining special indulgence, that it was expressly said,

"A bishop must be the husband of one wife." Among the followers of Jesus the two great evils of polygamy and slavery speedily disappeared, and the former more speedily than the latter. Both were felt to be antagonistic to the temper which Christ had imparted to His disciples, even more than they were to the letter of His teaching.

The example of our Lord gave force to His instructions. We read much of His intercourse with women, and the services He accepted from them. Here as in every other part of His life we see the Holy One of God. How pure and lofty, and yet how gentle and forbearing was His demeanour towards the women, with whom on different occasions he was brought into contact! How great was the compassion shown towards the widow of Nain and the woman of Canaan! How kind His treatment of the woman who was a sinner, and of the woman taken in adultery, while condemning their evil ways! How gracious was His acceptance of the ministrations of the women who followed Him! How tender His love for Martha and Mary, as well as for their brother Lazarus! How strong and steady was the filial love shown to His Mother! Never was woman more honoured and elevated than by the treatment she received from her loving and holy Lord, while He dwelt on earth, and never was man so impressively taught the honour he should render to her.

The book of Acts and the Apostolic Epistles are full of information regarding the effect produced by the instructions and example of our Lord. Women were admitted to the full communion of the Church. Women constantly met with men for God's worship, and for observing the ordinances of God's house. It was declared that in Christ Jesus there was neither male nor female, more than there was Jew or Gentile. As women ministered to their Lord, so they ministered to His Apostles, and by their services did much to promote His cause. What a testimony does Paul render to them in Romans xvi! In the establishment of the Church their part was different from that of man, but equally important. The distinction which nature has made between the sexes is constantly acknowledged, and the peculiar duties arising from woman's peculiar position are frequently inculcated, but this is done in a

mode, which sets forth the more clearly the part assigned her by her God, and the consequent honour conferred upon her. The duties of married life are enforced by the most tender associations. Ephesians v, 22 to the end. What book of ancient times has come down to us, in which the relation of the sexes to each other is set forth with the purity, moderation, and wisdom with which the subject is treated in the New Testament? In it not one prurient thought is expressed, and not a word is found, which ministers to licentiousness. We see all through the writings of the Apostles that they were led by the Spirit of Jesus.

It is undeniable, we acknowledge the fact with bitter shame, impurity has abounded in so-called Christian lands. Lust has broken through the barrier, which Christ's law had raised. Till man be renewed, and the mere profession of Christianity does not renew any person, obedience to a holy law cannot be expected. There however in the Bible the law remains inscribed in ineffaceable characters. From that it looks down on men, and pronounces its unscathing condemnation of their evil deeds. Its testimony against sin is continually borne, and deaf though man's depravity be to the voice which denounces it, it has done and is doing untold good. It has created the sentiment, which has led Christian nations to declare polygamy a crime, and to lay such restrictions on divorce as are never found in Muhammadan and heathen lands. The blots on the face of society in nominally Christian lands are too black to remain undiscerned, but to those who take a wide view of things, and desire to know the truth, the sanctity, which guards and blesses the family institution in the vast majority of instances, is far more prevalent than the violations, over which we have so much reason to mourn. For this inestimable sanctity we are mainly indebted to the teaching and life of our blessed Saviour.

We have made this statement about the teaching of the Bible in reference to the relation of the sexes, that we may be the better prepared for the teaching of the Qurán.

The teaching of the Qurán.

It is a calumny on the Qurán to say that it denies to women the possession of souls. It is also a calumny to assert that it gives additional license to that which had formerly existed

in Arabia. Women are constantly spoken of as possessing a rational and moral nature, and the command is given that they receive kind and respectful treatment. Husbands are warned against tyrannical and cruel conduct towards their wives. Khadijah, the first and for many years the one wife of Muhammad, was regarded by him with the warmest love and the most profound respect. It was natural for him, during the first part of his career at least, to render womanhood his high esteem. To women a considerable measure of freedom over their persons and property was afforded.

While truth requires us to mark the favourable aspect of Muhammad's teaching towards woman, truth also requires us, we may say compels us, to state facts which prove that Muhammad has done more perhaps than any man who ever lived to degrade woman, and thereby to degrade man.

Polygamy prevailed among the heathen Arabians, and instead of denouncing it, as he did idolatry, while restricting it he affirmed it had the sanction of the One Living and True God. Thus new strength was given to the hateful institution. The good done by its limitation was immeasurably less than the evil done by affirming it had the Divine approval. Muhammad indeed told his disciples that they must not marry more than one wife, if they were not able to treat their new wives with affection, provide for them, and do justice to each.* "If ye fear that ye shall not act with equity towards orphans of the female sex, take in marriage of such other women as please you, two, or three, or four, and not more. But if ye fear that ye cannot act equitably towards so many, marry one only, or the slaves which ye shall have acquired."—Sura 4th. From this it has been inferred that Muhammad disliked polygamy, and aimed by his rules at its final extinction. Might it not be with as much truth maintained that he condemned its existence, for the conditions he lays down could never in the nature of the case be fulfilled, as was shown by the history of his own family? It is plain that he interpreted these conditions in so liberal a manner, that they could be sufficiently complied with, while polygamy was practised.* Thus it was not only retained, but placed on a more secure basis than ever.

The terrible evil inflicted by Muhammad's teaching on this subject has been intensified by the license he gave in reference to female slaves. "Whoso among you hath not the means to marry a free believing woman, then let him marry such of your maid servants as have fallen into your hands as bondswomen. This is allowed unto him among you who is afraid of committing sin; but if ye abstain, it will be better for you." The inference drawn from these words has been that as to female slaves masters are under no obligation to lay a restraint on their inclinations. Slavery has been, and continues to be, a favourite institution in Muhammadan countries. A main reason for its continuance is the supply it furnishes of female slaves for Muhammadan households, to the fearful demoralization of the community. Muhammad's own conduct has done more than his words to produce this laxity. Notwithstanding the number of wives he had in his later years, he openly practised concubinage with female slaves, and on one occasion presented three beautiful captive women to Ali, Othman, and Omar—that is to the father of one of his wives, and to the husbands of two of his own daughters!

Our Lord declared that only one offence, which in itself was the dissolution of the marriage tie, justified divorce. Matthew v, 32. This was entirely consistent with the original law of marriage, which He re-affirmed. Where polygamy prevails, facilities for divorce are sure to be found. Muhammad furnished such facilities. We cannot enter into details. If the reader compare Deuteronomy xxiv, 1—4 with such passages in the Qurán as Sura ii, 226; and Sura iv, 39, 127, 128, he will perceive that the Arabian lawgiver gave facilities, to which the Hebrew lawgiver gave no countenance. In the Pentateuch Moses treats the subject with the utmost brevity, as if it were unwelcome, but Muhammad dwells on it as if it were a congenial theme. The rules he lays down are such, that the practice of licentiousness is made easy for those who have sufficient means to meet the necessary charges. They may be most devout Moslems, going through their daily prayers, performing all the rites of their religion, standing high with their fellow-religionists, and undisturbed by any qualms of conscience, while leading a life, which in Christian lands would consign them

to the rank of the most depraved. Can we suppose family life to be maintained in its purity under such laws?

The life of Muhammad in his later years, as related by his most admiring followers, shows that so far as he himself was concerned, the license given to others was not sufficient. In some instances he acted in a way which shocked his own followers, and raised such a commotion in his household, that he had to bring a Divine message to quell it. When his life is taken in connexion with his legislation and teaching, need we wonder at the baneful influence exerted for ages on the morals of the nations, who follow Muhammad as the Prophet of the latter age?

As might be expected from the polygamist teaching and example of Muhammad, he did not know how to dispose of women in the sphere of religion. He acknowledged they had religious capacity as well as men, but he did not see how it could be exercised and rewarded. He made no provision for women meeting with men for God's worship. His own house was part of the great Mosque at Medina, and so his own women, veiled if seen by men, could attend, but it would appear no women came from without. Down to the present day this separation in worship has been maintained. Women are taught to pray in private, and they may meet in the absence of men, but they dare not worship God with persons of the other sex, because we are told men in that case would be tempted to think of something very different from devotion. Is this an improvement on Christian assemblies? Muhammad had as much difficulty in disposing of women in the other world as in this. According to him the inhabitants of heaven marry and are given in marriage. The distinction of sex is as marked there as it is here. Most beautiful virgins are prepared to be the companions of the faithful. It is never hinted that these are the purified women of earth. They are represented as of heavenly origin. What then is to become of the good women, who have been the companions of the faithful here? As they do not appear to go to Paradise, Maulvies have been not a little perplexed in finding out some happy place for their eternal abode.

We know too well the many foolish and wicked things,

which have been said on this subject, by the professed teachers of Christianity, to press unfairly against Islām the doctrines taught by its Maulvies, but the purity of the New Testament contradicts and disowns impure teaching, come whence it may, while the Qurán and its author give no little countenance to the vilest teaching on the relation of the sexes. The subject is treated in the Qurán with a repelling coarseness. It has been largely discussed by Muhammadan writers, and views have been expressed by persons deeming themselves devout servants of the Most High, sufficient to shock every one whose mind has not become a sink of pollution.

Christians are in the habit of speaking of Musalmans as a proud, self-righteous, and sensual people. Is this a groundless prejudice, or is it a well-founded opinion? In reply to this question we say, that the tendency of Muhammadanism is, as we have been endeavouring to show, towards pride, self-righteousness, and sensuality, and as these evils are most congenial to the human mind, and are continually springing up even where opposed by powerful checks, we may be sure the tendency will produce its appropriate results to a large extent. There may be however much to restrain the tendency, and the effect of the restraint will be also manifest.

We are far from advancing the charge that all Musalmans lead sensual lives. This would be as untrue, as it would be uncharitable. There is no doubt, among the middle and lower classes especially, much pure family life. A Muhammadan writer says that "In India, especially in the North-Western parts, the practice of polygamy is exceedingly limited. Ninety-five Moslems out of every hundred are perfect monogamists."* This author tells us that it is not unusual for the parents of a daughter to stipulate that no other wife be taken by the bridegroom, except on the payment of a penalty, which would be ruinous to him. What a striking testimony in favour of the original law of marriage! We suspect this is too favourable a statement, but it is certain that the great

* A Critical Examination of the Life and Teachings of Mohammed, by Syed Ameer Ali, Moulvie, M.A., L.L.B., of the Inner Temple, Barrister-at-Law, p. 246. See Note at the end of this Essay,

majority do not avail themselves of the license given in the Qurán. So far as we can ascertain, polygamy prevails in the higher classes, and is generally considered a fit accompaniment of their position. In lands under Muhammadan rule there is, we believe, a similar state of things. As we have already hinted, some Muhammadans contend that polygamy is allowed in the Qurán only as a temporary arrangement, and that the regulations it contains point to the final triumph of monogamy, but this opinion is so opposed to the whole tendency of the Qurán, and the institutions founded on it, that it cannot be expected to obtain wide acceptance. Muhammadanism itself must perish before that can perish, to which by its rules and the example of its founder it has given its full sanction. Divorce continues to do its mischievous work. We know not to what extent it is practised in India and other countries, we are not aware that reliable statistics exist, but the law remains, and is a ready instrument by which whim, caprice, and passion can effect their purpose. We not infrequently hear of divorce among our Muhammadan neighbours.

Muhammad professed to complete the work of Jesus Christ. What are we to say to *this* completion? There are abnormal minds on Christian soil, which prefer Mormonism to Christianity, and by such, Muhammadan polygamy will be preferred to Christian monogamy. Others need only to have the facts set before them to find in them the most damning evidence against a system, which while it professes to carry us to a height far above Christianity, would actually drag us down to a depth far below Judaism. None have so much reason as Muhammadans themselves to hate this polygamy, which lies as an incubus on their community, and perhaps accounts more than any thing else for their lagging so far behind Christian nations.

VIII.—*The Qurán has much about the future state. Let us compare its teaching on this subject with that of the Bible.*

In the Qurán we find such passages as these. "They who believe not shall have garments of fire fitted unto them: boiling water shall be poured on their heads; their bowels shall be dissolved thereby, and also their skins; and they shall be beaten with maces of iron. So often as they shall endeavour

VIII.—
The future state, as represented in the Bible and the Qurán.

to get out of hell, because of the anguish of their torments; they shall be dragged back into the same; and their tormentors shall say unto them, Taste ye the pain of burning."—Sura 22nd. "The companions of the left hand shall dwell amidst burning winds, and scalding water, under the shade of a black smoke, neither cool nor agreeable. * * Ye shall drink boiling water; and ye shall drink as a thirsty camel drinketh."—Sura 56th. Page after page might be filled with such descriptions. What are we to think of them? Are they not shocking and repulsive, more than they are harrowing? We may be reminded of the descriptions given by Dante. It is not our part to institute a comparison, but it is our part to say, that happily Christians are not responsible for either Dante's or Milton's lurid pictures.

In the Bible, in the teaching of Prophets and Apostles, and above all in the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, the sufferings of the lost are set forth in a manner fitted to alarm the most wicked out of their evil ways. The intimations of the threatened doom are bright lightning flashes, illuminating for a moment the fearful pit, on the brink of which sinners stand, and then leaving them to reflect on the folly of remaining where they are. There is no enlargement on the dreadful theme. There is nothing to feed a morbid imagination. There is no exhibition of grotesque and horrible figures. The connexion between the suffering of sinners and the upholding of God's moral government is kept constantly in view.

One cannot but feel when reading the Qurán that Muhammad, in describing the future punishment of the wicked, gave vent to his anger against his enemies, of whom at such wearisome length he speaks in such bitter terms. He seems to gloat over the torture that awaited them. In Medinah there was a band of disaffected persons, who hated the Prophet and his rule, but were forced to feign submission. How fiercely does he hurl at these hypocrites, as he calls them, the threatenings of heaven! "Verily the hypocrites are those who act wickedly. God denounceth unto the hypocrites, both men and women, and to the unbelievers, the fire of hell; they shall remain therein for ever; this will be their sufficient reward; God hath cursed them, and they shall endure a lasting torment."—

Sura 9th. In vain in the book dictated by this Prophet do we find words like these, "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" "When Jesus beheld the city he wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes."

* If the descriptions of hell in the Qurán be horrible and repulsive, must we not pronounce the descriptions of Paradise to be utterly demoralizing? Here too, minute details are given, which it is impossible for us to transfer to our pages. We give two or three sentences. "Believers shall repose on couches, the linings whereof shall be of thick silk interwoven with gold: and the fruit of the two gardens shall be near at hand to gather. * * Therein shall receive them beauteous damsels, refraining their eyes from beholding any besides their spouses; * * having complexions like rubies and pearls."—**Sura 55th.** "Reposing on couches adorned with gold and precious stones; sitting opposite to one another thereon. Youths shall continue in their bloom for ever, shall go round about to attend them, with goblets, and beakers, and a cup of flowing wine; their heads shall not ache by drinking the same, neither shall their reason be disturbed. * * And there shall accompany them fair damsels having large black eyes; resembling pearls hidden in their shells: as a reward for that which they shall have wrought. * * Verily we have created the damsels of paradise by a peculiar creation: and we have made them virgins, beloved by their husbands, of equal age with them: for the delight of the companions of the right hand."—**Sura 56th.** According to this teaching, instead of leaving his sensuality behind him, when he leaves this world, man will then obtain scope for its unbounded indulgence. Here he has had only a few drops of such enjoyment. There he will drink for ever of the full stream of this pleasure.

Considering the character of man, considering in particular

the character of the Arabians among whom Muhammad appeared, what must have been the necessary effect of such representations? There have been high-minded persons among the Muhammadans, who have maintained, that these statements are to be understood in a spiritual sense, and in support of their views they quote such passages as this, "The most favoured of God will be he who shall see his Lord's face night and morning, a felicity which will surpass all the pleasures of the body as the ocean surpasses a drop of sweat." If this interpretation be correct, the Qurán has employed a style very liable to abuse, and therefore very unwise. The vast majority of Musalmans have taken the descriptions of paradise in their literal sense, and they have no difficulty in reconciling them with the more spiritual passages. Here they find the performance of their religious duties consistent with the license which the Qurán affords, and look on themselves as the servants of God, while leading very sensual lives. Why then may they not aspire to see the face of God in Paradise, while they live with the beautiful companions He in His bounty will confer on them, and partake of the rich viands He will spread before them? He only, who knows all things, knows to what extent these descriptions of Paradise have corrupted and enervated Muhammadan nations.

Very different are the representations of Paradise found in the Bible. The choicest things of earth are employed to illustrate its glory. Revelation xxi. The righteous shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God. They shall repose on Abraham's bosom. They shall partake of the fruit of life, and drink of the water of life. There is enough in such statements to give reality to scenes so different from those of this world, while there is nothing to gratify a morbid imagination. The details of the Qurán are most happily wanting. There is not a word to inspire the hope of the sensualist. Our Lord declared that with our departure from this world the distinctions of sex would come for ever to an end. When directed to the better land our minds are fixed on its spotless purity, and its high employments. "There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth." "They serve God day and night in His temple." "They shall see His face,

and His name shall be in their foreheads." The streets of gold, gates of precious stones, and fruits perpetually produced, are so manifestly figurative, that the so-called Christian, who takes them in a literal sense, proves himself unworthy of the name.

Are we not justified in saying that the representations of the Qurán about the future state are so far from being superior to those of the New Testament, that they are in a great degree a-going down to the representations of Hindooism, Buddhism, and corrupt Judaism?

IX.—*As the Qurán differs so much from the Bible in its representations of the future state, so it differs from it in its characterization of those, who are to occupy the two opposite departments of that state.*

We have already observed that the Qurán gives very superficial views of man's character and state. This superficiality attaches to the connexion alleged between his present character, and his future condition.

The Qurán declares hell to be prepared for the wicked, and among the classes of sinners named many are found, whom all would pronounce flagrant transgressors. It is clear however that the rejectors of his claims as the Apostle of God, and his personal opponents, were regarded by him as the most grievous offenders, and these he has no hesitation in consigning to perdition.

Whom does Muhammad declare entitled to heaven? The righteous of all ages, but in a special manner all who place implicit trust in him as an Apostle, and give unhesitating obedience to his instructions. The main condition of entrance into Paradise is the scrupulous observance of prescribed religious duties. Passages inculcating the necessity of acting from right motives not infrequently occur, but the exceeding prominence given to outward things has ever tended to produce undue trust in them. The sight constantly seen in India, of Muhammadans performing their devotion with all the regularity of soldiers on a parade-ground, suggests the immense value they attach to such service, and the proud satisfaction with which they regard it when completed. Personal acquaintance with those thus employed deepens our impression of

IX.—The connexion between present character and the future state. The teaching of the Qurán.

these acts being regarded, not as the mere expression of a devout spirit, but as with other outward things the all-in-all of the religious life. Such good deeds helped by heaven's mercy will overbalance any sins with which Moslems may have been chargeable. Even if very wicked, provided they have been sincere in their profession of belief in the One God, and in Muhammad as His Apostle, they will not be hardly dealt with. Death incurred in fighting for Islâm will carry them direct to Paradise. The doctrine of the entire renewal of our nature, as indispensable for our admission into heaven, is entirely foreign to the whole spirit of the Qurân.—Suras 2, 40, 43, 74.

The teaching of the Bible.

Very different is the teaching of the Bible. By the possession of conscience all men everywhere are responsible, and the violations of conscience will be justly punished. God has given a supernatural revelation of Himself, and those who not only act against the dictates of conscience, but refuse to submit to His word, especially those who reject the salvation wrought out by the Son of God, are represented as peculiarly guilty. Instead of partiality shown to Jews and Christians, who profess to be zealous in the cause of God, and are punctual in discharging outward service, while their hearts are given to the world, against them the severest censure is directed. They may give all their goods to feed the poor, and even give their bodies to be burned, but without love to God and man, they are utterly unfit for heaven. There is no punishment so great as that which awaits those, who have abused distinguished privileges. Musalmans, however wicked, are represented as at last getting to Paradise, because believers in God and His Apostle, but unbelievers and idolaters will be eternally excluded. In the Bible we find no such provision made for wicked Christians, if we may use such an expression.

In order to our entering heaven, we are taught in the Scriptures there must be holiness of heart, showing itself in holiness of life. Man sees himself to be a sinner, sees Christ to be the Saviour, receives through Him the pardon of his sins, is accepted by God, and a new life is imparted to him. Under the power of this new life, impelled by love, he abounds in good works, and is even ready if called to give his life for his Lord

and Saviour, but he looks forward to heaven not as the reward of his goodness, but as the gift of God's grace. The very martyrs have washed their robes and made them white, not in their own blood, but in the blood of the Lamb. A place in God's visible Church on earth will secure no one a place in the Church above.

When we look at the Qurán on the one hand and at the Bible on the other, in which book do we find the most worthy representations of the connexion between present character and future weal or woe? We leave the reader to decide.

X.—*The progress in the unfolding of revelation, characteristic of the Bible, is in marked contrast to the doctrine of abrogation as found in the Qurán.*

X.—Progress and abrogation.

In the Bible we see the gradual accomplishment of God's purposes, the form undergoing marked changes, but the same great principles being always conserved, and the same spirit maintained, while every successive revelation has raised the Church to a higher position. There is not the destruction, but the fulfilment of what went before.

Muhammad, we may suppose unconsciously, sets aside the first principles of previous dispensations. He writes as if God were in such a sense a sovereign, that He could reverse all the principles on which He had formerly acted in the government of the world. The very facts Muhammad changes, as if they could be made different from what they were. Amidst the exigencies of his career he was ever ready with a Divine message suited to the immediate case. Sometimes the former order was reversed, sometimes it was upheld. For instance at first no place was appointed for the Qibla, the place towards which the face should be turned in prayer. "To God belongeth the east and the west; therefore, whithersoever ye turn yourselves to pray, there is the face of God; for God is omnipresent and omniscient."—Sura 2nd. Then Jerusalem was appointed and remained the Qibla for six or seven months. Finding the Jews as a people deaf to his claims, and seeing that his brother-Arabians were most likely to be his best followers, to please them he gave the preference to the Kaaba, the far famed temple of Mecca.—Suras 2nd and 3rd. Some of Muhammad's disciples were so scandalized by these arbitrary changes, that they

we were tempted to leave him. The most zealous adherents of Islám acknowledge that no fewer than 225 verses have been cancelled by later ones. The general principle is laid down in these words, "Whatever verse we shall abrogate, or cause thee to forget, we will bring a better than it, or one like unto it. Dost thou not know that God is almighty? Dost thou not know that unto God belongeth the kingdom of heaven and earth?"—Sura 2nd. Who can regard God with any reverence, and not be shocked with the arbitrary procedure attributed to Him, as if He were a mere absolute ruler, capriciously forbidding to-day, what He had commanded yesterday?

XI.—God's
sovereignty
and
man's
freedom.

XI.—*The doctrine of God's sovereignty, and man's freedom, as taught in the Bible, is widely different from the doctrine as taught in the Qurán.*

Man's freedom and God's sovereignty are asserted in the Bible in unmistakable terms, and we cannot understand how right views of God and man, views accordant with facts patent to all, can be held, where either doctrine is denied. How God can be sovereign, while man has all the freedom necessary to accountability, is a question by far too difficult for man to solve, as shown by the continued, vigorous, and yet unsuccessful attempts, put forth by the ablest minds to effect its solution.

The teaching of
the Bible.

Some statements in the Bible on the subject of the Divine sovereignty are very strong, and at first sight startling. Romans ix; 2nd Thessalonians ii, 6—13. When we take these passages in their connexion, and compare them with other passages, we come to this conclusion, that where God gives nothing, He requires nothing, and that from His very nature He can never form men to wickedness, but men having, by the abuse of that mysterious freedom with which they are endowed, given themselves over to wickedness, they are by God's judgment left to the dominion of their wickedness, and to the evils that dominion brings with it.

In the Qurán it is often both stated and implied that man is free. The most extreme fatalists, who ever lived, are constantly forced to acknowledge this freedom. The nature and grounds of this freedom are however never stated in the Qurán with the clearness and accuracy, with which they are set forth in the Bible, as for instance in Romans ii.

In the Qurán the sovereignty of God is set forth again and again in terms, to which in the Bible we have no parallel. At this we need not be surprised, as the Qurán delights to dwell on God as a great and dread Sovereign, who does all things according to His mere pleasure. Where in the Bible do we find passages like these? "Had God willed he would have collected all on the same way. They always live in division, excepting those upon whom the Lord has had mercy; and for this He created them. Therefore whom He wills He leads astray, and whom He wills He puts in the right way; and He is mighty and wise." "God ordains both falsehood and truth." "Revile not the idols which they invoke besides God, lest they maliciously revile God, without knowledge. Thus have we prepared for every nation their works: hereafter unto God shall they return, and He shall declare unto them that which they have done." "The fate of every man have we bound about his neck; and we will produce unto him on the day of resurrection a book, wherein his actions shall be recorded." "It is He who hath created you; and one of you is predestined to be an unbeliever, and another of you is predestined to be a believer: and God beholdeth that which ye do."—Suras 6, 7, 17, 64.

The teaching of the Qurán.

This fatalistic doctrine seems to have immense power on many minds in seasons of excitement and danger, as shown by the bravery and endurance of the Saracenic hosts, who burst out from Arabia for the conquest of the world, but in ordinary times it has a torpifying effect, and represses all progress. Does not this suggest one of the reasons, which account for the stationary, we ought rather to say, the declining condition of most Muhammadan nations? Whatever may have been its effect in this respect, it is difficult to understand how those who hold such views can regard God otherwise than as the author of sin, and can see justice in His punishment of those, whom He Himself has made wicked.

It is right to state that while the vast majority of Musalmans have taken and continue to take the teaching of the Qurán on this subject in what appears to be its plain meaning, and stoutly contend for predestination in its extreme fatalistic sense, there have always been found some, who contend for human liberty, and profess to found it on the teaching of their

sacred book. The Mutazalas have differed from the Sifâtiyas as much as extreme Arminians have differed from extreme Calvinists.

XII.—The means employed for the propagation of His religion differed essentially from those employed by Muhammad.

It has often been said that under the Mosaic dispensation the Israelites were commanded to fight for their religion. In the Bible we find no such command. The Israelites did not war with the Canaanites to bring them within the pale of the Church. They were God's executioners on a people, whose sins and crimes called to heaven for punishment. We do not read of a single war waged for the purpose of spreading the religion, which God had established. The New Testament can be quoted in favour of a religious war, only by gross perversion. Our Saviour is indeed represented as saying to the servants in the parable of the great supper, "Go into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." They were to go forth, not as soldiers to drive poor persons to the feast, but as servants to urge them to accept the invitation given. The word used by our Lord is often employed to set forth moral suasion. Matthew xiv, 22; Mark vi, 45; 2nd Corinthians xii, 11. Christ said expressly, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews." He said to Peter, "Put up thy sword into the sheath." The disciples understood, and obeyed the command. They were not in a position to use force,* but the principles they taught, and the spirit they displayed were so utterly antagonistic to the employment of carnal weapons, that in order to the employment of them it would have been necessary first to have abjured their faith.

Muhammad pursued an opposite course. He commenced as a teacher, and for some years employed, as we have already observed, no weapons beyond instruction, expostulation, and

* If they had denounced the Roman government, and set up the standard of revolt, they would have soon been in such a position. In that case, thousands of the disaffected would have speedily gathered round them.

warning. During that period he secured disciples, but they were few and depressed. Like the disciples of our Lord, when persecuted in his own city Mecca, he fled to another city, Medina, but instead of confining himself like them to the employment of moral means, unlike them he sought temporal rule, and grasped the sword. Henceforward till near the end of his career he was engaged in incessant strife. In his person he combined the prophet and the warrior. He commanded his disciples to fight for their religion. "I will cast a dread into the hearts of the unbelievers. Therefore strike off their heads, and strike off all the ends of their fingers. This shall they suffer, because they have resisted God and His Apostle. * * This shall be your punishment; taste it therefore: and the infidels shall also suffer the torment of hell-fire. * * Fight against them until there be no opposition in favour of idolatry, and the religion be wholly God's."—Sura 8. Passages of this kind abound in the Suras given at Medina. It is well known how the command to fight was obeyed, not only in Muhammad's life time, but after his death. The effective preachers of Muhammadanism were the hardy fierce Saracen soldiers, who successfully assailed the effete Roman and Persian Empires. Islām has often and successfully used suasion, but the sword has been its favourite weapon, whenever it has been available. Such use of force receives no support from the Old Testament, and is condemned by the New Testament, but it is in full accordance with human nature, as shown by much which has been done by professing Christians, with the professed intention of promoting the cause of Christ.

Is compulsion or suasion the proper instrument for diffusing the truth? Did Muhammad improve on preceding dispensations, when he betook himself to the sword?

XIII.—*The success achieved by Christianity was entirely different from that achieved by Islām.*

XIII.—
 The success achieved,

We have observed the different means they employed. Let us glance at the success secured.

Christianity when it set out on its career found the world arrayed against it. It dashed to the ground the most cherished hopes of the Jews, and was in return bitterly hated by them. It assailed principles and practices, which had become a second

by Chris- nature to the nations of the earth. It aimed not only at the
tianity, overthrow of polytheism, idolatry, and false philosophy, but
at the eradication of lust, pride, selfishness, and all the vices
which follow in their train. It inculcated the renewal of the
heart, as well as the renovation of the life. It was thoroughly
adapted to man's character and state, but that very adaptation
drew forth the fiercest hatred against it, as men were so be-
fooled and besotted by sin, that they preferred bondage to
freedom, and degradation to honour. Contempt, calumny,
confiscation, imprisonment, popular tumult, and death in its
most fearful forms were used in turn to crush the new faith,
and were used in vain. It spread itself from country to
country, and took such deep root in a vast number of minds,
that storm after storm passed over it, stripping off rotten and
unfruitful branches, but giving the stock firmer possession of
the soil. Till the reign of Constantine the majority in the
Roman Empire were outside the professing Church, but hea-
thenism was like an old withered tree, to which no effort could
give a new lease of life. The spring had set in after a long
dreary winter. A revolution had been effected in the character
of men, vastly superior to any which the world had previously
known.

and by The speedy and signal success of Muhammadanism is one of
Islám, the most notable facts in the history of the world. Before the
death of Muhammad his fame had spread to the most remote
parts of Arabia, and many of its tribes were gathered under
his banner. Soon after his decease, inflamed at once by reli-
gious zeal and worldly ambition, they broke forth from their
deserts and valleys, and fiercely assailed the armies of Rome
and Persia. These fell before them as the corn falls before
the reaper. Within a hundred years of Muhammad's flight
from Mecca, Islám ruled from the Oxus to the gates of
Hercules.

Islám kept pace with the triumph of the Saracenic arms.
The idols were thrown to the ground, and scorn was poured on
the gods the people had hitherto adored. The saints, images,
pictures, and relics of Christian nations were treated with as
much disdain, as the various objects revered by the heathen.
Great numbers in every invaded land professed adhesion to this

conquering religious community, and we may suppose that, finding no help came from the things in which they had hitherto trusted, they were sincere in their profession. To many oppressed ones the doctrine was most welcome, that all believers in the One God, and in Muhammad as the Apostle of God, stood towards each other on the footing of brotherhood and equality.

We have already acknowledged, and we again acknowledge with pleasure, that Muhammadanism conferred benefits on the nations. The overthrow of idolatry, the utter discomfiture of heathenism, the stern rebuke to the fearful corruptions of Christianity, the proclamation of the One True and Living God as the only rightful object of worship, and the call to men to turn away from all other confidences to Him; were surely no small gain to mankind. The legislation introduced, and the morals taught by this new system, though in our opinion essentially defective, were in many instances an improvement on what they displaced, and imposed a restraint to some degree on vice and selfishness. The nations won by Islām were, we may suppose, somewhat improved in character by its reception, to what extent it is impossible to say.

Place the success of Islām at the highest point, which truth led by charity will allow, and yet it is evident it was essentially different from that of Christianity. It demanded no inward renewal. It called for no struggle against indwelling sin. It required no repression of self-righteousness, pride, and lust. It did not make personal holiness indispensable to admission into heaven. It attached immense importance to outward services. Fighting for the faith was declared a most meritorious act, and dying for the faith a sure passport to Paradise. Every incentive was given by Islām to earthly ambition. Its votaries, by attacking their unbelieving neighbours, could gain for themselves this world and the next. It presented to them as their goal a Paradise of sensual delight. How much was there in such a system to win the Arabians, we ought rather to say, to win the human heart! Its characteristics were well adapted to human likings and tendencies, and its success can never be justly compared with that of a system, which while it seeks to confer on man the highest

good, wars with his cherished lusts, and insists on personal holiness.

There is one thing accounting for the first success of Islám, which we must not omit to state. While unyielding in reference to idolatry, Muhammad was very yielding in reference to other things, which were dearer to the Arabians than their gods. The Kaaba at Mecca was to them the most sacred-spot on earth. It was the gathering place of the tribes. It was their strongest bond of union. The rites there performed were deemed supremely important. Muhammad, so far from depriving them of this object of passionate attachment, conferred on it a higher honour than it had previously possessed. It was cleansed, dedicated to the worship of the One God, the old rites were in substance retained, and its holy temple was declared to be the place, where all nations for all succeeding ages should meet to wait on the Most High. In many other respects Muhammad met the wishes and prejudices of his countrymen, as is evident to every one who studies the Qurán in the light of their history. If their gods were taken from them, in the many strange stories about men, genii, and demons, with which the Qurán abounds, and in the marvels of Divine power it relates, there was much to fill the void in their imagination.

The success of Muhammadanism has often been adduced as a proof of its Divine origin. The argument, if sound, carries us to the conclusion that Hindooism and Buddhism have had a similar origin. They have prevailed for ages, and have millions of votaries at the present hour. The argument would carry us to the conclusion, that the most contradictory doctrines, that truth and falsehood, have come from God. The prevalence of moral evil in the world is the mystery of mysteries, which defies solution, and the prevalence of systems we deem most erroneous is only a department of the mystery. When a system like Christianity, so impressed by God's holiness and goodness, and therefore so opposed to man's corruption, prevails in circumstances most hostile to its progress, and in a vast number of cases transforms the lives of men, are we not justified in declaring such success to be a proof of its having come from above?

It is full time to release our readers from the contrast we have set before them. We have advanced proofs, which abundantly satisfy us, that Muhammadanism, so far from being an improvement on Christianity, as it claims to be, and as it must be, if any good reason for its existence can be advanced, is throughout a deterioration. In its true and better portions it is only following in the steps of Christianity. It proclaimed the unity of God, but that was no new doctrine. That was taught in the Bible in the way most fitted at once to awe and win the human heart. It proclaimed a universal religion, and a universal brotherhood, founded on the worship of the Living God. Was not this the very work Christianity set out for itself, and which it strove to accomplish by means worthy of so noble an end? We have seen that Christianity gives vastly higher views of God's character and government, than Islám does, takes a far juster view of man's character and state, makes far more suitable provision for his wants, secures for him far nobler blessings, and paves the way far more effectually for social and political, as well as for moral and spiritual progress. The New Testament never appears with brighter lustre than when it is placed beside the Qurán, which professes to surpass and therefore supersede it.

Our readers will have observed, that throughout this Essay we have treated the Qurán as the standard for Muhammadanism, and the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the standard for Christianity. Any other course would have been unfair and deceptive. Within the pale of both Muhammadanism and Christianity, rites, practices, and opinions, widely varied and often contradictory, have largely prevailed. If Christians were responsible for all taught and done in the name of Christ, and in professed obedience to His will, where should we get a place to hide our heads? Happily we who receive the Old and New Testaments as the one standard of faith and practice, however much we mourn, and we mourn most sincerely, over error, folly, oppression, and wickedness, committed in the name of Christ, are not in any way responsible for these evils, and with the Bible before us we repudiate and condemn them. Justice requires Muhammad to be treated with similar fairness. Doubtless much has been said and done by his followers, which

Inference.
The superiority of
Christianity to Islám.

he would disapprove, and to which the Qurán gives no sanction. Every one who knows any thing of the Muhammadans in India is aware, that the mass are given over to gross superstition. While professing to worship God alone, they put as much trust in their pírs (saints), in honour paid to them, in prayers at their tombs, as the Hindoos do in their gods. The Shíahs in India and elsewhere have exalted Ali, till he almost, in not a few cases altogether, has become to them an incarnation of Deity, and the death of Husan and Hosein has been regarded as a sacrifice for the sins of men. In the Qurán there is not a little to encourage a superstitious spirit, but it ought not to be made responsible for opinions or practices, to which it does not give countenance either by express statement, or by fair inference.

Our subject has been too large and important to have allowed us to enter, even if we had been competent for the task, on the very different though closely connected theme—the respective history of Christianity and Mubammadanism; their influence on the world, their present state, and their future prospects.

Christians and Muhammadans should look at the grounds of their faith.

If we could get the ear of our Muhammadan friends, we would entreat them to examine afresh the grounds of their faith. We think we are ready to look at ours, and we could feel no rest in our spirits, were we not assured that they can stand the severest scrutiny. To our Muhammadan friends we would say, 'It is not your opinion or ours, which will at last prevail. The truth alone will stand, however we may regard it, and by the truth we shall all be judged. You profess to build on the foundation of the Old and New Testaments. How can you know you are building on these books, if you do not read and study them? If you look only at a few isolated passages, and tearing them from their connexion, give them a meaning, which they were never intended to convey, you are simply misleading yourselves. Neither the Bible nor the Qurán is thus to be understood. You say that the Bible was corrupted by Jews and Christians, for the purpose of suppressing Muhammad's claims. Never was a more unfounded charge made, as we have endeavoured to show. If you candidly consider this question, resolved to follow wherever truth may

lead you, we cannot doubt you will see that on this point you have been entirely mistaken. Taking the New Testament, as we believe it can be proved to have come down from Apostolic times, and even the most sceptical in Christian lands will acknowledge, as it was for centuries anterior to the birth of Muhammad, you will see that according to it there is no place left for any one to supersede the Lord Jesus Christ in any one of His offices, that He is the One Saviour and the One Mediator, and as such is entitled to the love, the homage, and the trust of all nations and ages. You will see that we are right in maintaining that every thing good in Muhammadanism has been anticipated by Christianity, and that in the numerous important points in which they differ, the New Testament is immeasurably superior to the Qurán.'

We can suppose some may be inclined to think we have done scant justice to the morality and spirituality inculcated in the Qurán, on which the better minds of Muhammadan nations have firmly fastened. We know well the passages, to which such persons could refer us. We have not overlooked them, we have read them with pleasure, but the principles of the religious system taught in the Qurán are not moulded by them; and therefore they are fitted to have a feeble influence on the adherents of Islám. Error must always have a measure of truth mingled with it, to give it the requisite plausibility. It would be difficult to name any corruption in the sphere of religion, which on some side or other has not a truthful element attached to it, and it seems to be there for the very purpose of throwing over error the shield of plausibility, thereby guarding it against attack, while its essential falsehood is left to work out its evil ends.

In our Essay on Hindooism, we gave the advice to our readers to peruse the translated portions of the Hindoo sacred writings. We would now advise them to betake themselves to the reading of the Qurán, if they would really know the difference between it and the Bible. The translation by Sale is allowed by Arabic scholars to be as a whole very faithful, though somewhat paraphrastic. Rodwell's version is highly praised, but we have not seen it. The Hindustanee scholar with Abdul Qádir's translation before him, in which the Ara-

No injustice has been done to the Qurán.

The Qurán should be read along with the Bible.

bic Original is most literally and faithfully followed, can satisfy himself as to the general accuracy of Sale's translation. In our day, when notwithstanding its enlightenment, things are confounded with each other which essentially differ, the reading of the Qurán along with the Bible would be well fitted to induce salutary thought.

The bearing of this Essay on the Divine origin of Christianity.

The main object of this series of Essays is to point out the reasons Christians have for a firm adherence to their faith, and the claims that faith has to universal acceptance. The subject of this Essay is indirectly, but powerfully, helpful to our object. The Jews were so far from being able to produce the Old Testament, that they did not maintain the high position to which it had raised them. They were continually retrograding from it. The Talmud is as great a contrast to the Old Testament as can be conceived. Flowers have been culled from that desert to show how rich and beautiful it is, but the illusion is dispelled, when under the guidance of learned men one tries to travel through any one of its districts. We believe a great service would be rendered to the cause of truth, if a considerable portion of the Talmud were made as accessible to us as the Bible is. The Christians of the second and third centuries were so incapable of producing the New Testament, that with it before them as a model, their writings fall immeasurably behind. Centuries afterwards Muhammad came, and framed an eclectic religion, professing to be an improvement on every thing which went before, with the result we have endeavoured to show. Looking at what he did and taught, and at the influence exerted by his system on the world, we would say anew to the Lord Jesus Christ, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.'

NOTE.—PAGE 52.

Syed Ameer Ali's "Critical Examination."

Syed Ameer Ali goes so far as to say, "Polygamy is disappearing, or will soon disappear under the new light in which the laws of the Prophet are being studied."—p. 227. We would attach more importance than we can do to this statement, if the book in which it is found were characterized by common fairness. It is one of the most singular productions we have read for many a day. The Author from his excessive praise of Ali seems to be a Shiah Muhammadan. He is a Graduate of an English University, and a Barrister of the Inner Temple. He stands up as stoutly for Muhammad and the Qurán

as any Musulman, who had never seen a Christian face, and yet he clearly shows that he has no belief in a supernatural revelation, or in the office of a Prophet at all, in the sense in which the word is ordinarily understood by both Christians and Muhammadans, and in which it is certainly used in both the Bible and the Qurân. He has no insight into the Christian Evidences, or the nature of Christianity. He writes throughout as if he held a brief for Islam *versus* Christianity, extolling his Prophet and system to the skies, and depreciating Christ and Christianity, though of course in Muhammadan fashion he can bestow fair words on "the great Prophet of Nazareth." Christ was prematurely cut off, and we must therefore make allowances for his deficiencies! Even Muhammad's uxorious doings in his later years are warmly defended. He entered into one matrimonial engagement after another from the highest and noblest motives. Not a word is said about his concubinage with female slaves. If our Author had touched this point, he would no doubt have shown, that here too the Prophet's conduct was admirable. We are not surprised to find Syed Ameer Ali Khan at the close of his book writing thus, "Three great evils have befallen the human race; three great disasters, which have materially retarded the progress of the world, and put back the Hour Hand of time for centuries. The first is the failure of the Persians in Greece; the second is the unsuccessful siege of Constantinople by the Saracens under Muslemah in the eighth century; and the third is the unfortunate result of the battle of Tours between the Moslems under Abdur Rahman Fehri, and the wild hordes of Charles, duke of Aquitaine, surnamed by the Christians, Martel."—p. 341, 342. From this we may infer that England and Germany, if they had only become Muhammadan, would by this time have risen to equality with Persia, Turkey, and Morocco! The book ends by expressing the hope that Islâm and Christianity may shake hands, become good friends, and go forth together to shed benefaction on the nations. By that time each system must abandon every distinctive feature, and when they become so essentially changed, the retention of the old names will only minister to an illusion.

Though the book we are noticing is called "A Critical Examination," it has only three or four sentences about the authorities used, and these furnish no help to the reader in estimating their value. This Critical Biographer is chargeable in his very Preface with singular unfairness. He says, "Muir and Sprenger have both constructed their histories mainly on the writings of two Moslem authors (Wâkidi and his Kâtib) regarded in the Muhammadan world as the least trustworthy and most careless biographers of Mohammed. Of the former, Ibn Khallican speaks thus:—'The traditions received from him (Wâkidi) are considered of feeble authority, and doubts have been expressed on the subject of his veracity.'"—p. vii. If fairness did not require from this Biographer of Muhammad any reply to the strenuous defence of Wâkidi's veracity by Muir and Sprenger, we might have supposed honesty would have demanded of him insertion of the testimony rendered by this very Ibn Khallican to Wâkidi's Kâtib or Secretary, "Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn-Saad ibn-Mani was a man of the highest talents, merit, and eminence. He lived for some time with Al Wâkidi in the character of a Secretary, and for this reason became known by the appellation Kâtib al Wâkidi." * * * He composed an excellent work in fifteen volumes on the different classes of Muhammad's Companions and Successors. * * His character as a voracious and trustworthy historian is universally admitted." Muir, Vol. I. Introduction, p. xevii. Wâkidi was a voluminous writer, but with the exception of one book, his writings have not been preserved in

their original form, and on his Secretary, "universally admitted" to be "a veracious and trustworthy historian," Muir, Sprenger, and most Muhammadan historians mainly depend. This production of a witness, when he suits our purpose, and this concealment of him when he is not on our side, are worthy of a pleader, who thinks of his client, not of truth, but such an artifice is utterly unworthy of an honest historian. Is it possible that our Author, when condemning both Wākidi and his Secretary, and quoting Ibn Khallican to sustain his charge against the former, was ignorant of the fact that Ibn Khallican had given the strongest testimony in favour of the latter?



"His name shall endure for ever : his name shall be continued as long as the sun : and men shall be blessed in him : all nations shall call him blessed."—PSALM, LXXII, 17.

"In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people ; to it shall the Gentiles seek : and his rest shall be glorious."—ISAIAH, XI, 10.

"As to our own religion, its very soul is Missionary, progressive, world-embracing. It would cease to exist if it ceased to be Missionary ; if it disregarded the parting words of its Founder—' Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every nation.' "—PROFESSOR MAX MULLER.

"In the whole compass of human benevolence, there is nothing so grand, so noble, so Christian, so truly God-like, as the work of evangelizing the heathen."—REV. WILLIAM ORME.

Christian Missions in India.

The subject of this Essay is Christian Missions in India.

Before entering on our special subject it may be well to make preliminary remarks on the principle of Missions, and their general history, as this Essay may come into the hands of some, whose information on this theme is very limited. It is also well for all engaged and interested in Indian Missions to look steadily at Mission principles, and to look beyond their own sphere, so that they may the better realize the fact, that they form a part of a great army going forth in many lands to assert the claims of Christ as Lord and Saviour. They are stimulated and encouraged by hearing how the war prospers.

In the previous Essays we aimed at presenting the evidence for the Divine origin of Christianity furnished by the incomparable dignity and excellence of our Lord's character and life, by the testimony and teaching of His Apostles, as still extant in their writings, and by the pure, lofty, and far reaching instruction, which distinguishes the Bible from all other books. We took a glance at the controversies of the day in their bearing on Christianity, with the object of showing that they have utterly failed to shake the rock on which Christianity is built. We also considered the genesis of unbelief, and gave our reasons for regarding it, not as the result of enlightenment, but as the outcome of causes, which have indisposed the mind for the candid examination of the Christian Evidences. We then proceeded to consider the religious systems prevalent in India, and in the contrast which they present to Christianity by their downward tendencies, we found additional reason for cleaving to our Christian faith.

The object of the previous Essays.

If at all successful in the previous Essays (and if not successful we are sure the advocate, not the cause, deserves the

The inference.

Christian-
ity is for
the world.

blame,) we are prepared for the inference, that Christianity is intended and fitted for the whole of the human race, and that a nobler and more beneficial enterprise, than that undertaken for its universal diffusion, cannot be conceived. Is Christ so gentle, so wise, so great, so powerful? Is He the all-loving Friend of man? Has He come into the world for the very purpose of delivering him from sin, and of conducting him to heaven? Then surely every eye should be turned to Him, every heart should receive Him, every soul should repose on Him. Is the Bible so stamped with the seal of heaven? Is it so replete with instruction suited to our case? Does it address every part of our nature, and meet us with the very guidance and strength we need? Then all should be introduced to it, that hearing its words they may listen to the voice of God. Are the systems, which man has framed for himself so defective? Do they utterly fail to supply his spiritual wants? Then the sooner they are abandoned for soul-satisfying truth the better. With these views we cannot but wish God speed to Christian Missions, formed for the very purpose of making known the Gospel to the millions hitherto unacquainted with it, and of thus bestowing on them the highest boon God has given to man.

The conviction that Christianity is from heaven carries with it the obligation to make it universally known. If there was no express statement to that effect in the Bible, it would be implied by its entire tenor. We might however expect the obligation to be distinctly and frequently enforced, and the expectation is realized. The evidence is full and decisive, and has been set forth in many an able volume. We can merely mention in a few sentences some of its leading features.

The Scrip-
tural
authority
for Mis-
sions.

The Bible declares that God has made of one blood all the nations that dwell on the face of the earth. We are taught that they are possessors of the same nature, have become the subjects of the same depravity, have fallen into the same condemnation, and urgently need the same deliverance. Abraham and his descendants were chosen to prepare the way for the Messiah, who was to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, as well as the glory of His people Israel. They were appointed to conserve the truth, which alone can enlighten and purify

mankind.* The writings of the prophets abound with predictions of the time, when under the reign of the Messiah, the Prince of Peace, the Saviour of the world, and the Lord of all, the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge and love of God, the unnatural and vile rebellion against heaven shall cease, and men, at peace with God, shall be at peace with each other, and be distinguished by the exercise of every virtue.

The New Testament takes up and carries forward the theme, on which the Prophets dwelt with such delight. Throughout, it asserts the principles of Missions, enjoins their prosecution, furnishes details of their operations, is pervaded, we may say saturated, with their spirit. Christ Himself came on a Mission to our world. He was the sent of God. His birth was hailed as ushering in the great Mission era. "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will to men." He taught His disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." While on earth, He prosecuted His Mission work, and His last command to His disciples was to carry it on. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." He died to ensure its success, by offering up that propitiatory sacrifice, on account of which the treasures of God's grace, containing the inestimable blessings of pardon, purity, and eternal life, might be thrown open to all mankind. Christ Himself is called the great Apostle, or the great Missionary of our profession. The disciples received as their high designation the name of Apostles, or Missionaries, and as they bore the name they did the work. Through their efforts, and in a very special degree through the efforts of the great Missionary St. Paul, the Gospel was propagated far and wide. Varied and sometimes very wrong motives have prompted effort to bring nations within the pale of the Church, and political circumstances have favoured the design, but whenever true Christianity has made its way among any people, it has done so invariably, either directly or indirectly, through Missionary effort, not by any means necessarily by persons bearing the Missionary name, and specially set apart

* See Essay on the Bible.

for the work, but certainly by persons impelled and led by the Missionary spirit.

Opposi-
tion to
Missions
is oppo-
sition to
Christ.

With this teaching of the Bible, and these facts before us, how can we be opposed to Christian Missions, without being opposed to Christ? Missionaries may fall far below their office, their piety may be stunted, their efforts feeble and misdirected, their success very limited or none at all, but their cause, however unworthily represented, is the cause of God, of truth, and of mankind. To contend against it is to contend against the Lord Jesus Christ, and its final triumph is as sure as the stability of His throne.

while
spiritual
life ever
favours
them.

As the Missionary element permeates Christianity, and cannot be separated from it, we are prepared to find Missionary effort put forth in some form or other, whenever there has been spiritual life. It is impossible to alight on any period, where faith in Christ has had sway over human hearts, without witnessing a desire to bring others under the rule of the Redeemer, and without effort to secure this great result. In the history of the Christian Church we find much, which is hateful and repulsive, and there is something peculiarly shocking in the cruelty and fraud with which some heathen nations were forced and cajoled into the profession of the Christian faith, but many a page is lit up with the love, the self-denial, the toil, and the perseverance of those true servants of the Lord Jesus, who gave themselves and their all to the diffusion of the Gospel among unenlightened nations.

Missions
in the
Middle
Ages.

At several rather lengthened periods there has been a lull in this work, but it could not have altogether ceased, without Christianity becoming an utter failure. Throughout the Middle Ages, notwithstanding their darkness and superstition, men were found full of zeal and love, who devoted themselves to the work of Missions, and who drew around them, as friends and coadjutors, persons of congenial character. Patrick amidst the Irish tribes, Columba among the Picts and Scots of Scotland, Severinus among the barbarian hordes on the Danube, Columbanus and Boniface among the Tentonic nations, Otho among the Pomeranians, Anschar among the Northmen, and others of the same spirit, effected a noble and blessed work, and deserve to be held in everlasting remembrance,

though some of them, as we shall afterwards have occasion to observe, when moral suasion seemed ineffectual, adopted means to secure their ends, which however accordant with the spirit of their times, were opposed to the teaching of our Lord, and deserve to be condemned.

The great struggle of the Reformation, commenced in the 16th Century, and carried on through a great part of the 17th, was too absorbing to allow much thought to be directed towards the nations outside the pale of Christendom, but even then devout souls looked beyond the arena of the fierce conflict, and longed for all nations being brought to the feet of Jesus. In the 17th Century Eliot laboured most indefatigably for the spiritual good of the American Indians, and led many to take a warm interest in the work. In the 18th Century, notwithstanding its deserved character for spiritual torpor, we find bright illustrations of Missionary zeal. Among the poor rude inhabitants of cold bleak Greenland and Labrador, among the oppressed slaves in the West Indies, among the down-trodden inhabitants of Africa, among the fierce Indian tribes of North America, and also to some extent among the semi-civilized nations of Eastern Asia, the Moravians toiled and suffered for the diffusion of the Gospel. Within the same era Brainerd among the American Indians, and Egede among the Greenlanders, laboured with a self-denial and a devotedness, which have never been surpassed. The career of Egede, one of the most heroic and enduring men who ever lived, was full of thrilling adventures. It is much to be regretted it is so little known. Danish Missionaries, among whom Ziegenbalg and Swartz have obtained the highest name, conducted vigorous and successful Missions in Southern India.

Towards the end of the 18th Century the Missionary enterprise entered on a new epoch. The Society for the Diffusion of Christian knowledge, and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel had existed for a considerable period, and though under the exclusive management of the Church of England, they had freely employed suitable agents, without regard to their ecclesiastical position. Other Societies were formed to carry on the great work. The Methodists and Baptists in their denominational capacity, and Evangelical Christians of

The Re-
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and Post-
Reforma-
tion times,

different communions under the banner of the Missionary Society, now called the London Missionary Society, entered the field. Since that time, in England, on the Continent of Europe, and in America, wherever indeed there has been Christian vitality, Missionary Societies have been formed, several on a strictly denominational basis, not with a view to promoting sectarian ends, but with a view to drawing out the resources of their respective communities, and others on a basis, which admits the united action of all Christians.

Every succeeding decade has witnessed the formation of some new Society, the increased occupation of old fields, entrance on new fields, and the prosecution of evangelistic work to an extent, and with a vigour previously unknown. Nearly one hundred Societies have sprung up, embracing every department of the work, and aiming at the occupation of every field open to the Church. It is to be hoped we have now reached the limit of separate organizations. It is also to be hoped that instead of reaching the limit of effort, the Christian Church is only awaking to a sense of its duty, and is bracing itself for its high enterprise with a vigour, a persistency, and a self-denial, more worthy of those who owe their all to the Saviour, whom the Gospel makes known, and more commensurate with the greatness and difficulty of the work to be accomplished.

Mission
literature.

The literature of Missions to the heathen, as conducted by Protestants, is large and varied. To Christian hearts this literature has been most instructive and stimulating. In it they have had set before them examples of devotedness and courage, well fitted to prompt to imitation in their respective spheres. By it they have been furnished with trustworthy information regarding the degradation, ignorance, and misery of those, on whom the light of revelation is not shining, and their gratitude has been thus enhanced for the signal privileges they themselves enjoy. By it they have been led to see anew the power of the Gospel in elevating, purifying, and renewing the most hopeless and depraved. Great have been the benefits thus received. Christians have become more imbued with the spirit of their Master. They have entered in a larger measure into His joy. Their views have been en-

larged, and their sympathies deepened. By looking at the heathen far away, and putting forth effort on their behalf, they have been stirred up to think more of the spiritually destitute around them, and to labour more zealously for their good, Home and Foreign Missions thus going hand in hand. By the exercise given to Christian principle, they have grown in all the elements of the Christian character. When contemplating the changes effected by the Gospel in others, they have in many cases sought and acquired a more thorough transformation of themselves.

This Mission literature is valuable not merely in a directly Christian aspect. It has features, which ought to commend it to every person possessed of an active and intelligent mind. Do we wish our information increased about the countries of the earth, and their inhabitants? Here there is much to introduce us into new regions, and make us acquainted with new tribes. Are we interested in new aspects of nature, and new phases of society? Here there is much to gratify our curiosity. Are we stirred by narratives of adventure, by encounters with savage beasts and savage men, by hair-breadth escapes on sea and land? Here is abundance of exciting narrative. Do we admire courage, perseverance, ready resource, when shown in any praiseworthy enterprise? Here is much to draw forth our admiration. Do the sufferings, privations, and death of heroic men, bent on a great object, evoke our sympathy? Here is full scope for its exercise. In the prosecution of this evangelistic work much has been borne, much has been endured, many lives have been sacrificed, sometimes by disease, caused by unhealthy climates, often by privation and toil, and not infrequently by violence. Is it not a startling fact that the Church Missionary Society lost fifty-three Missionaries and Missionaries' wives during the first twenty years of its existence in Sierra Leone? Are we the votaries of science in any one of its departments—in geology, zoology, botany, philology, or the history of man? Here is help for the student of science, to whatever department he may apply himself. When we look at the varied information and the interesting character of this literature, apart from its directly Christian bearing, we are surprised at the comparatively little

interest it has excited, outside the circle of Christian readers. If only its Christian aspect were hidden, it could not fail to secure a large popularity, but it appears the prominence given to spiritual objects and motives scares away many from its perusal.

Outline of
Christian
Missions.

It is not part of our object to furnish details regarding the Missionary enterprise as carried on in different parts of the world. We can do nothing more than present a brief general statement. Only the ignorant and the prejudiced can deny that marvellous results have been produced. In whatever direction we turn, on whatever portion of the Mission field we fix our eye, we see a great work has been accomplished, although the results in some spheres are much more palpable and striking than in others.

The Islands
of the Pacific
Ocean.

Look for instance at the Islands of the Pacific Ocean. Some sixty-three years ago every Island was heathen, and now there are 400,000 Polynesians professing Christianity. In whole groups heathenism has so entirely disappeared, that young men from these Islands on coming to London have for the first time seen in a Mission Museum the idols their fathers worshipped. The inhabitants of many of these Islands had been among the most debased of human beings, and had been the terror of strangers who approached them. Captain Cook describes the inhabitants of one Island as rushing down like wild boars to the shore on seeing his ship, and so fierce was their demeanour, that he called their land Savage Island. Now in the whole Pacific there is not an Island, which may be approached with greater safety, and where the mariner is more assured of kindly treatment. As another illustration of the work done we may mention the Samoan group, which is composed of ten Islands, with a population of 35,000. European Missionaries commenced their operations there thirty-six years ago. The entire population has been for some time professedly Christian. A greater proportion attend public worship than of any community in what is called Christendom. There is a School in every well-sized village. The Bible has been translated into their language. More than £1000 is collected yearly for the diffusion of the Gospel. A valuable trade has been originated. The Samoan imports and exports to Australia alone range from £50,000 to £100,000 annually.

These converted Islanders give not only their money but themselves to the Missionary cause. Many of them have gone forth as Missionaries to Islands still heathen, and in this capacity they have shown no ordinary courage and endurance. They have borne the severest privations, exposed themselves to the greatest perils, and in several instances lost their lives. We must not suppose that all the Islanders, who have entered the Christian Church, have done so from spiritual motives, and have emerged from all the evils of their heathen state. To suppose this would be to ignore the obvious features of human nature, and the certain facts of human history. It can however be safely affirmed, that many prove by their lives they have become true Christians, and that society generally has been wonderfully elevated and sweetened by the Gospel. The persons best acquainted with the facts are the Missionaries, and their sufferings and toil entitle them to the highest credit, but apart from them, the testimony of Officers in the Naval Service of Great Britain and the United States of America, of Captains of whalers and of other ships pursuing a legitimate trade, and of most respectable travellers bent on ascertaining the truth, has put the vast favourable change effected beyond all reasonable doubt. Their testimony is amply confirmed by the trade statistics of the commercial nations of the earth, and by the sums actually received from these Islands by the Missionary Societies engaged in their evangelization. The only counter evidence comes from run-away sailors, kidnappers of the Islanders by fraud and violence, sandal-wood adventurers, whose one aim is profit without any regard to justice in its attainment, and travellers, who can scarcely write a page without revealing their contempt for true excellence. Favourable evidence from these would be damaging indeed.

Similar results have been secured in other fields. Among the once enslaved population of the West Indies, the tribes in the south and west of Africa, the Kols, the Santals, and the Shanars of India, and the Karens of Burmah, many thousands have been won to the profession of Christianity, and of these we have reason to hope numbers have been won to the love of Christ. To Madagascar however we must look, if we would see the most signal effects produced in our Century by Chris-

Other
Mission
fields.

tian Missions. Indeed in the whole history of the Christian Church, it would be difficult to find a more remarkable tribute to the power of the Gospel, when written on human hearts by the Spirit of the living God.

Madagas-
car. A little more than half a century ago a Mission was commenced in Madagascar. Through the desire of the then reigning King for the introduction of European appliances with a view to the civilization and political aggrandizement of his people, the Mission had a promising beginning, but shortly after his death opposition arose, which ended with the banishment of the Missionaries from the Island. Then a persecution, which raged with one or two brief lulls for twenty-five years, burst forth against the Natives, who dared to profess their faith in Christ. How fierce the persecution was is well shown by a Missionary who went to the Island after its cessation, and had every opportunity for knowing the facts. He says, "Every sort of punishment that malignity could devise and despotism inflict, was visited upon the Christians. They were crucified, speared, beheaded, sawn asunder, thrown over the rocks, burnt at the stake, put head-foromost into pits, and boiling water poured over them; many perished by the tangenapoisson, others died miserably in chains which were as literally, as poetically named *Beranomaso*,—*many tears*. Loss of honours, slavery, floggings, and fines, were the minor punishments inflicted upon those who had shown favour to the hated Christians. But the old adage proved true. "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." The Queen determined to stamp out Christianity. Little did she know what she had undertaken. So far from accomplishing her end, it actually grew and spread during persecution. While at the beginning of this persecution only two hundred had made any profession of Christianity, during the next twenty-five years above a hundred openly laid down their lives for the testimony of Christ, several hundreds indirectly suffered death for his sake, and at least two thousand more had suffered exile, chains, or loss of property, for their love to Jesus. And at the end of that period, so far from Christianity having been extinguished or stamped out, it was found that there were nearly seven thousand professing Christians, when toleration was proclaimed.

The work was of God, and could not be brought to nought." What is the state of things now? Among the Hovals, the ruling tribe, Christianity is generally professed by high and low, the Queen and nobles taking the lead. The national idols have been destroyed. There is half a million of professing Christians. The number of Churches is 700, and of children at School 20,000. Above 150,000 books in the Vernacular are sold yearly. Besides supporting their Ministers, and building their Churches, they maintain 120 Catechists in outlying districts, occupied by the tribes different from the Hovals, but subject to them. Among these tribes the work of evangelization is making rapid progress. As might be expected, thousands are now entering the Church in the day of its prosperity, who kept aloof in the day of its adversity, but when we look at the sufferings, the privations, the toils, the cruel deaths by which this prosperity was reached, can we doubt there is much spiritual vitality? If the palpable and undeniable facts, now stated, do not furnish an instance of extraordinary success, it may well be asked, what is meant by success? Has success ever been secured?

While presenting our brief rapid review of Protestant Missions, we have not been forgetting that Protestants alone have not been engaged in this work. The Greek Church has done something in this work, and the Church of Rome has done much. Our Essay might be deemed very incomplete, if it took no notice of the Missions conducted by Roman Catholics, which are so often praised to the disparagement of Missions conducted by Protestants. We must express our reluctance to express our views regarding these Missions. In love to Christ we have no doubt many Roman Catholics and Protestants meet, in a way, which, if perceived, would be very surprising to both parties, but Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, as systems, are so widely apart in their conception of Christianity, and consequently in their apprehension of the proper means for its diffusion, that it is extremely difficult for their respective adherents to understand or estimate aright each other's labours. However anxious we may be to reach the truth, it is most difficult to get into a position from which we may discern it. The difficulty is increased by the

Missions
of the
Church of
Rome.

absence of exact information regarding Roman Catholic Missions. The Editors of the Allahabad Conference Report were very desirous to present the statistics of these Missions, but one has only to look at their volume to observe, how very unsatisfactory and inexact the details are, which Roman Catholics themselves have furnished. The statements regarding Missions in China, in Japan, and elsewhere are so indefinite, and have such an air of exaggeration, that we know not how to appraise them.

We make no controversial statement, when we say, that the Missions of the Church of Rome to the heathen have been carried on for centuries with great zeal and diligence, and with ample resources, and have at the expense of toil, suffering, and life achieved great results. Not another step can be taken without a divergence of opinion. All we can do is to give our impression, after looking at the subject as carefully and impartially as we can. If our remarks appear harsh, we can only say we are compelled to make them by our sense of truth.

A contrast between Missions as conducted by the Church of Rome on one hand, and by Protestant Churches on the other, will best bring out our meaning.

Contrast
between
Romish
and Pro-
testant
Missions.

1st.—Roman Catholic Missionaries, in accordance with their system, strive to secure accessions to the Church, and conformity to its rules, as the sure passport to Christ and heaven, while Protestant Missionaries, in accordance with their reading of Christianity, put stress on bringing individuals to Christ, and through Him introducing them to the fellowship of the Church. Roman Catholic Missionaries attach an overweening importance to Baptism and outward rites, while Protestant Missionaries look on these rites as means of grace to be reverently observed, but utterly inefficacious apart from prayer, instruction, and guidance in the Divine life. These divergent views of Christianity lead to divergent modes of Missionary labour. The treatment the Bible has received from these parties respectively throws a flood of light on this subject. To the translation of the Bible into the vernacular of the people, among whom they labour, Protestant Missionaries have attached supreme importance, and to this work they have devoted

their best efforts, while Roman Catholic Missionaries as a body have been utterly averse to the measure.

2nd.—The sensuous worship of Rome has much to recommend it to the heathen. Protestant Missionaries are debarred by their principles from recourse to images, pictures, processions, incense, gorgeous dresses, and other means, which Rome so largely employs. When its usual worship was not found sufficiently attractive, its Missionaries especially the Jesuits, of whom Robert DeNobili, nephew of Cardinal Bellarmin, was a notable instance, freely adopted and incorporated with the Church service heathen rites and festivals. Protestants never use such means for obtaining converts, and their communities, though on that account smaller, have a higher and healthier character.

3rd.—Rome consistently abhors and condemns liberty of conscience. Throughout its entire career, and never more strongly than at present, however liberal individuals may have been, it has demanded universal submission, and has enforced the demand, wherever it has had power. In the history of Romish Missions, the sword of the state, when available, has been used as well as the suasion of the Priest, to compel men to come in. Under compulsion of this kind crowds have been brought into the Church. For an illustration of Rome's readiness to use force we may point to the Jesuit Mission to Abyssinia in the 16th Century. The Mission was an entire failure, which was thus explained by the Bishop Oviedo, who had been engaged in it. "There was one thing they might be certain of, which was, that there was no other remedy for Ethiopia but a good body of Portuguese troops, that if they had but five or six hundred stout musqueteers, he would undertake for the reducing of Ethiopia to the Church in a short time." To this, the Jesuit historian, Tellez, adds, "It had always been the opinion of such as had any experience in the affairs of Ethiopia, that unless the Catholic preachers were defended and authorized by dragoons, they would never have the success that was desired among those schismatics." Here again Protestant Missionaries are under a seeming disadvantage, but have a real advantage.

4th.—The nature of the success won by Roman Catholic

Missions has been much discussed. We must beware of sweeping statements, which are so easily made, and in the estimation of candid persons are so unsatisfactory. Very few have the amount of information required to justify a confident opinion, and still fewer can put themselves into the unprejudiced attitude, from which they can rightly interpret facts. We can merely venture to give our impression, and it must be taken for what it is worth. The prejudice is blind indeed, which refuses to accord to many members of the Church of Rome, who have engaged in this work, the praise of great devotedness—of a readiness, even of an eagerness, to labour, suffer, and die, in order to the attainment of their object. It would be sad to suppose, and we do not suppose it, that no true converts have been gained by all that toil, self-denial, and endurance. Mere individual testimonies to the character of converts, either Roman Catholic, or Protestant, are of little worth. Not a lie can be uttered which some are not prepared to confirm, and others to accept. The witnesses themselves must be tested before their evidence can be received. However sincere and real Roman Catholic converts in many places may have been, after reading all that has come our way regarding Missions in the Philippine Islands, in Paraguay, Japan, China, India, and other regions, we have come to the conclusion that the Christianity they have formed is very superficial and unsatisfactory, as seen in the mass of their adherents. Roman Catholic testimony has confirmed us in this view. Francis Xavier, the first Jesuit Missionary, baptised an immense number, and it is absolutely certain that he was bitterly disappointed with his own work. In a letter written seven years after coming to India he says, "The natives, on account of the enormity of their wickedness, are as little as possible fitted to embrace the Christian religion. They so abhor it, that they have no patience to listen to us if we introduce the subject. To ask them to become Christians is like asking them to submit to death. Hence all our labour is at present to guard those who are now Christians." In another letter written about the same period he gives his opinion of the Christians, "If you will, in imagination, search through India, you will find that few will reach heaven, either of whites or blacks, except those who depart

this life under fourteen years of age, with their baptismal innocence still upon them." Those who came after him used similar terms. Pope Benedict XIV, as the result of protests by other Religious Orders against the proceedings of the Jesuits, issued a Bull in 1744, in which he condemned on the authority of his predecessors, as well as his own, the principles and practices of the Jesuits in Southern India. He describes the Missions as all but ruined. At a comparatively recent period, the Abbé Du Bois, after a Missionary career extended over thirty years, speaks of the worthlessness of the Native Christians in unmeasured terms. In illustration of their worthlessness he states that in 1784 Tippoo Sultan, bent on making proselytes, issued secret instructions, that in one day the Native Christians in his dominions be seized. The Abbé tells us that 60,000 were caught, before whom the alternative was put of either Islám or death, and of that multitude not one stood by his faith. He uses these remarkable words, "The low state to which the Christian religion is now reduced in India, and the contempt in which it is held, cannot be surpassed. There is not at present in the country more than a third of the Christians who were to be found in it eighty years ago, and this number decreases every day by frequent apostacy. It will dwindle to nothing in a short period; and if things continue as they are now going on, within less than fifty years there will, I fear, remain no vestige of Christianity among the natives." There is much more to the same effect, which we cannot quote. In the Supreme Court of Madras the other day a curious case occurred, in which a R. C. Native Christian was concerned, in which it was declared by several witnesses, and accepted by the Court, that Native Christians of this communion followed Hindoo religious rites to such an extent, that they were entitled to the privileges of Hindoos. In China Jesuits have engaged most largely and zealously in Missionary work. Much has been said in their favour, but if we believe a tithe of what has been said by their brethren of other Orders, large deductions must be made from the praise thus rendered.

5th.—The unity of Roman Catholic Missions has been alleged as affording a great advantage over the loose separate

organization of the Missions conducted by Protestants. Most untrue statements have been made about the differences of Protestant Missionaries. They must have been angels, not men, if unbroken harmony had been always maintained, but it can be confidently asserted, that Protestant Missionaries as a rule have maintained a most brotherly attitude towards each other, have helped each other in every way in their power, have rejoiced in each other's success, and sympathized in each other's disappointment. How different has been the case with Romish Missionaries is well known to those acquainted with their history. Dominicans, Franciscans, and Augustinians on the one hand, and Jesuits on the other, were for many years at bitter feud. Nothing could exceed the fierceness of the tone, with which they assailed each other, and the gravity of the charges hurled at each other's heads. The entire Roman Church, with the successive Popes, who administered its affairs, was grievously disquieted by the deadly strife. If there be peace now, it is because Jesuitism is now all triumphant in the Church of Rome, and has no rival left. Every hostile voice is silenced, or can be uttered only from outside the pale.

Francis
Xavier,

When speaking of Roman Catholic Missions we must not forget the high place assigned to Xavier. All must acknowledge he was a man of noble qualities. His great devotedness, burning zeal, high courage, and warm-heartedness, shown throughout his very active though brief career, demand our admiration. These great qualities cannot conceal the defects of temperament, which seriously marred his work. He was over-sanguine, and therefore easily discouraged. He hastened from one sphere to another at the impulse of his too eager mind, to the great detriment of work just commenced. One result of this hurrying about at the command of his own impetuous temper was, that he never learned an eastern language, so as to impart instruction in it, as is evident from his own letters, though Gregory XV when canonizing him declares, "When he visited people of various tongues, which he had *never learnt, he was in the habit of speaking their language with as much elegance and fluency as if he had been born and educated in the countries." We prefer Xavier's own testimo-

ny to the Pope's decision. In these days a good knowledge of the vernacular is deemed a first qualification for a Missionary, and this qualification Xavier had not. While kindly in his disposition, he issued his commands to his associates with an imperiousness, which few autocrats have equalled. When thwarted, his wrath blazed out fiercely. His main defects however arose from his being thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Rome, and his consequent adoption and recommendation of measures utterly unlike those which the Apostles employed. We have just read the interesting life of him written by the Rev. Henry Venn, in which we find him unconsciously but vividly described by himself in his characteristic letters.

If those who praise Xavier as a model Missionary, were to see him followed in our day, they would be loud in denouncing his imitators as dangerous fanatics. What would be thought of Missionaries seeking and obtaining from Queen Victoria a commission to convert the Natives of India, which her Officers would slight at their peril? Such was the commission from John III of Portugal, which Xavier brought to India. What would be thought of Missionaries coming out in a Government ship at the public expense, and drawing on the exchequer for all the money needed for the prosecution of their enterprise? Xavier and his associates were thus supported by the Portuguese State. What would be thought of Missionaries requesting the British Government to put down idolatry with a strong hand, wherever its authority has been fully established? At Xavier's instigation, by orders from the King of Portugal, the Viceroy of Goa, commanded, "That no pagan superstition be tolerated in the island of Goa nor in that of Salsette; that they should break all the idols that were there; * * that they should punish every Brahmin who would oppose the preaching of the Gospel; that they should comfort the poor infidels newly converted with an annual income of a thousand crowns, which should be paid out of the mosque of Bassein; that they should confer no more public offices on the pagans"—and much more to the same effect. What would be thought of Missionaries taking up warmly the cause of a refugee prince, and begging Government to collect an army to place him on the throne of his native land, with the avowed

object of bringing his people within the pale of the Church? Such was Xavier's counsel in reference to a refugee prince from Jaffnapatam, where he said 100,000 could be easily added to the Church of Christ. Bitter was his disappointment, when circumstances brought the project to the ground. What would be thought of a Missionary charged with political and commercial functions, when going to a Native State with the avowed object of turning the people to the Christian faith? Thus commissioned Xavier went to Japan and the Islands of the Eastern Archipelago. What would we think of our Government making it the condition of rendering help to an oppressed community, that they should all receive baptism? This was the condition of help given to the fishermen on the coast of Southern India, whom Xavier baptised in such numbers, that he says by repeating so frequently the creed and other things, his voice and strength often failed him, and that his hands failed through the fatigue of baptising. What would be thought of Missionaries begging Queen Victoria to order her Officials in India to undertake the work of conversion to Christianity, and making their promotion depend on their success, those being advanced who could show a good return of converts, and those reduced, whose zeal had been lax, and their converts few? This was Xavier's proposal to the King of Portugal, as set forth in a remarkable letter dated January 20th, 1548. What would be thought of Missionaries asking Government to banish or put to death apostate converts? This Xavier did. What would be thought, if the worthy man, who last year set out from Peshawur for the country of the Kaffirs beyond Affghanistan, and who was brought back by order of Government, had on his enforced return written to the Queen denouncing the Viceroy as a traitor, and demanding his degradation, and also to the Bishop of Calcutta, calling for the immediate excommunication of the wicked man? Such was the purport of the letters written to the King of Portugal, and the Bishop of Goa, in reference to the Portuguese Governor of Malacca, who had put his prohibition on a wild scheme "Xavier had formed for entering China, just as it was on the eve of being carried into effect. We need not proceed further. Those who are in the habit of recommending Xavier

as the model Missionary would be foremost in denouncing an imitation of his procedure. Notwithstanding the noble and truly Christian sentiments every now and then found in his letters, and notwithstanding his sincerity and earnestness, we are repelled by his general idea of Christianity, and of the means fit for its propagation.

The views and practices of Protestant Missionaries are widely different. Our readers must be left to decide for themselves, whose operations are most accordant with apostolic example. We may undoubtedly learn much from contemplating the Missions of Rome, but we see no reason for prosecuting evangelistic work in their mode. Protestant Missions have been marred by imperfection as every thing human is, but they need not fear comparison with Missions conducted on an entirely different principle, if only the comparison be carefully and candidly made.

We fear our readers will deem our preliminary remarks unduly extended, but we hope they will not condemn them as irrelevant. They bear, we think, directly on our special subject, Christian Missions in India, and they are made with a view to investing it with additional interest.

Christian
Missions
in India.

The first thing which presents itself to our view, is the great extent of the field. Indian Missions have for their object the evangelization of a vast region, with a population of nearly 240 millions, of whom 183 millions are under the direct sway of Britain, while all are under its suzerainty. This is by far the largest sphere for Missionary effort presented to the Christian Church. China has indeed a larger population, but access to the interior is so precarious and difficult, that whatever treaties may provide, the vast mass of the people are beyond our reach. No country under Muhammadan rule has a population worthy to be named beside that of British India, and no such country is yet open to the Gospel. Notwithstanding the promises of the Sultan, freedom to embrace the Gospel by the followers of Islâm is practically denied in Turkey.

Extent of
the field.

As in its physical features, so in its human aspects, India has a marvellous diversity. We find in it every conceivable variety of social, intellectual, and moral condition, from the greatest refinement, though not of the western type, to the

Diversity
of the in-
habitants.

rudest barbarism, from intellectual culture of a high order to the most profound ignorance, from a philosophical acuteness, which strives to penetrate the secrets of the universe, to a sottish listlessness, which scarcely rises above the level of the beast. The Hindoos, with their endlessly diversified castes, form the great majority, and closely connected with them, though pronounced separate from them, is a great population, who worship their Gods, follow their rites, imitate their divisions, so far as they are allowed, and would gladly take the honoured name of Hindoo, which those above them scornfully refuse to give. Then come the millions, who call Muhammad their Apostle. The Non-Aryan tribes, occupying chiefly the more mountainous districts of Central, Eastern, and Southern India, form a distinct and very interesting portion of the population.

The difficulties of Indian Missions.

If India be the largest and most diversified, it is also the most arduous of Mission fields. We think facts fully justify us in making this assertion. The difficulties are obvious to the most cursory observer, and are painfully felt by all engaged in the work.

The obstacles to conversion among the Non-Aryan tribes are such as will be always presented by barbarism and ignorance, with the superstition they engender, and the vices they foster. These difficulties stood in the way of the Gospel among our own Celtic and Teutonic forefathers, and have been found in many a field entered by modern Missionaries. These difficulties have been increased among several of these Non-Aryan tribes by intercourse with Hindoos, by the superior position among them, which individual Hindoos have obtained, and by the introduction to some extent of the Hindoo caste system. In other respects the obstacles are neither less nor greater than those encountered in other lands, where a similar state of society prevails.

It might be supposed that the Muhammadans from their acknowledgment of the Old and New Testaments, as a Divine revelation, and from their reverence for Jesus Christ as a Prophet, would have been prepared for the Gospel message, but in fact their intense prejudice against the distinctive doctrines of Christianity, and their unbounded confidence in themselves, make them the most determined foes of the

Christian Missionary. In this respect they resemble the Jews, who, while they glory in the Old Testament, obstinately and scornfully reject the New Testament, in which their own writings find their fulfilment.

The obstacles to the acceptance of Christianity by the Hindoos are different, but they can scarcely be said to be less formidable. If Hindooism had been framed for the very purpose of opposing the Gospel, we cannot see how it could have been made more antagonistic than it is. Christianity rests on historical facts, but Hindoo literature has no history, though historical elements underlie its legends. The Hindoo mind has thus come to have a singular inaptitude for the appreciation of historical truth. The wildest legends, without any degree of veri-similitude, have utterly indisposed the mind for reality and simplicity. Christianity in a special manner addresses the conscience. It speaks to our moral nature, but Hindooism by its Pantheism, by its fatalism, by the vile character attributed to the principal objects of its worship, by the merit attached to mere outward forms, and by the divorce it makes between religion and morality, has done all it could to efface moral distinctions. Christianity asserts human brotherhood, and so far as it prevails binds men to each other by the closest ties, but Hindooism, in the name of religion, by its caste system raises a wall of separation between class and class, and denounces as irreligion every attempt made to throw down that wall. This partition is declared to be Divine, and we are told must therefore be upheld.

The question has been discussed, Were the obstacles to the progress of the Gospel in Apostolic days as great as those which oppose it in India? Sometimes the answer has been given in the affirmative. In this answer we cannot concur. We at present put out of view political circumstances. The idolatry of Greece and Rome was debasing, but in corrupting power we think it must give place to the idolatry of this country. The legends were wild enough, but they were not so grotesque, so defiant of all probability, as the legends long prevalent in India. The stories were often vile, but not so gross as those of the Purānas. Pantheism and fatalism had come in with their blighting influence, but the Pundits in their

The obstacles encountered by Apostolic and Indian Missions compared.

presentation of these doctrines have by their extravagance outstripped the Classical Philosophers. In the ancient western world there was abundance of national and tribal hatred and contempt, but there was nothing which approached the intensely anti-social system of caste, with the bondage it entails on all subject to it.

The Hindoo Caste system,

The institution of caste has not we think had the prominence assigned it, which it deserves, in discussing the respective difficulties encountered by Apostolic Missions and Indian Missions in our day. It is indeed seen by all to be a formidable obstacle, but the nearer we come to it, and the more closely we survey it, the more we are impressed by its fearful power. In all countries human beings are for good or evil subject to social influences, and every deviation from ordinary custom entails persecution in some form or other. Sometimes the persecution is fierce, and extends to person, property, and even life, but in that case it is generally short-lived, and when it is over, even when entire concord is not secured, there is no insuperable bar to living together as members of the same great human family. Persons can again gather round the social board, and come under the softening influence of social intercourse.

Very different is the stern implacable demand of caste. It binds together the members of one class in a degree, which will not permit a hair-breadth's deviation from prescribed customs, and at the same time, so far as all inner social life is concerned, it separates that class from every other by an impassible gulf. According to the strict caste system, no person from without can on any account, for any services, be admitted to a caste above his own, and no one excluded can be re-admitted. Resistance to caste tyranny not only entails expulsion from the privileged enclosure, but shuts against the daring rebel the door of every other class within the great Hindoo pale. The Papal ban, the very threat of which struck terror into the nations of Europe in the Middle Ages, when inflicted, was after a time removed, but as a rule the Hindoo ban remains on its victims till death sets them free. We hear now and then of restoration to caste, and when that is effected it is by the door of the most humiliating submission, while there are offences,

which entail permanent exclusion. The proscribed persons, so far as the Hindoo community is concerned, are doomed to the most painful isolation, and regarded as socially dead—possessed of no rights, and entitled to no respect. Need we wonder that persons shrink from opposing an institution, which has such power to crush them? Need we wonder at the fetters it imposes on the minds as well as on the persons of its subjects, filling them with alarm at the very thought of yielding to any influence, which will bring them into collision with what they have been taught is the Divinely ordered rule of society?

It might be supposed that an institution like this, which so exalts the higher classes and depresses the lower, would be popular with the former, as it puts them on a lofty pedestal, and guards their privileges, and would be unpopular with the latter, as it dooms them and their descendants, as it doomed their fathers, to perpetual inferiority. Human nature must be essentially changed, before these feelings for and against caste can be entirely suppressed. The feeling in favour of the institution among the higher classes is naturally strong, but the feeling against it among the lower classes is not what might be expected. The great Buddhist revolt against Brahminism received much of its impetus from its opposition to caste, but at the present day it is remarkable what a spell it has thrown over those who suffer most from it. Persons deemed by the higher classes unworthy of the name of Hindoo speak of their respective castes in a manner which indicates pride in the institution, and not mere submission to it. They have sub-divisions within their castes, and maintain them rigidly, each having his own place, and not daring to step into the place of another, the member of one sub-division deeming himself superior or inferior to the member of another, as the case may be. The writer of this Essay had recently a long talk with a Chumar (a man dealing in leather), and was told by him there were seven sub-divisions in his caste, and these were named in the order of their rank. We lately heard a washerman speak with an air of superiority of washermen, whose caste was greatly inferior to his. Even sweepers, who occupy so low a position, are never ashamed of their caste, rather

glory in it, and sub-divide themselves after the manner of others. In these distinctions we may see a reflection of the foibles common enough, where caste is unknown, but the caste system gives a strength and virulence to these foibles, which elsewhere they do not possess.

These remarks about the favour with which caste is regarded by those whom Hindoos regard as outcastes are founded on our own observation of the people. We must remember however that our observation has been confined to a limited field, and that a wider observation might have brought us to a different conclusion. India is a vast region, and hasty generalization is the source of many and great mistakes regarding it. We are inclined to think there are parts of India, where the people are not so caste-mad (if we may so speak) as the lower classes in Northern India often are.

We wish we could believe the statements often made about caste being weakened, and hastening to its destruction. There are no doubt many influences abroad, which tend to its relaxation and rupture, and in cities, which have a large European population, many of the educated classes openly and habitually violate it, without suffering social proscription, but these form a very small proportion of the Hindoo community, and so far as our observation has gone, among the people generally the continued sway of caste over all classes, from the highest to the lowest, is much more apparent than the encroachments made on it.

The anti-social influence of the Caste system.

One effect of the system is that it entirely prevents people of other communities from having intercourse in the form ever found most favourable to friendly and brotherly feeling. In whatever way it may be explained, it is certain that eating and drinking together has given to human beings a peculiarly good opportunity for knowing each other, and has had a singular power in linking heart to heart. To Missionaries the barrier raised against this intercourse is peculiarly obstructive. They have had no difficulty in securing it among heathen nations generally, and thus access has been obtained into many a heart. Between the Missionaries and Hindoos there may be, and there often is, a friendly feeling, which may show itself in various ways. Even food may be prepared for the Mission-

ary, and he may be asked to partake of it, but the host cannot partake with him. He must be reminded that he belongs to an impure race, with whom such close intercourse would be pollution. How different was the case with the Apostles! The Jews had many scruples about food, but as a rule, the primitive Christians could freely partake with the heathen. The Apostle Paul had to warn the Corinthian Christians against cultivating too free intercourse with the heathen in their feasts.

The Apostles encountered no such obstacle.

Had the Apostles and their followers any thing which can be truly put on a level with caste among the obstacles, which stood in the way of their success? We think not. Their difficulties were great, but the difficulties of Indian Missionaries are still greater, and they cannot have the sympathy, the prayers, and the help they need, till these difficulties be more adequately realized by the Christian Church.

The unchristian character of so many bearing the Christian name, it is well known, is a most formidable obstacle to the progress of the Gospel in India. It is painful to impugn our own countrymen, but is not the fact undeniable, and ought it not to be mentioned, that the profligate life of some and the manifest ungodliness of others are continually adduced by Natives for declining even to examine the claims of Christianity? They often say Missionaries alone wish them to become Christians, and it is easily seen by them that in many a case the profession of Christianity, instead of recommending them to Europeans, is deemed a disqualification for both public and private service.

The ungodliness of many Europeans.

Among the difficulties may be mentioned the very severe climate, but this is a difficulty with which Missionaries have to contend in common with their fellow countrymen of every class.

The climate.

We must now turn to the other side—to the circumstances, which facilitate Mission work in India.

Missions in this land are to a large extent prosecuted among a partially civilized and educated people—a people of settled and simple habits, who cultivate the soil, and practise the arts, which form a prominent feature of civilized life. The great majority are unlettered, but even then they have a large share of acuteness and intelligence. They might be deemed more

Advantages of Indian Missions.

accessible to the teachers of a new creed than a people besotted and stupefied by barbarism, and the habits, which it fosters. The Hindoos, as an intensely religious people, might be expected to enter keenly into every religious question presented to them. This advantage is however to a great extent neutralized by the intensely hostile aspect of Hindooism towards every characteristic of Christianity, as already indicated.

Missionaries in this country have the advantage of enjoying the conveniences and comforts of civilized life. The protection of the British Government not only secures their personal safety, but furnishes them with abundant facilities for traversing the land, and coming into contact with all classes of the community. No spot under British rule is forbidden to them, and in ordinary circumstances no obstruction is in their way, except that caused by the character and habits of the people. This assured protection, while prosecuting Mission work among the millions of India, is undoubtedly a great advantage, for which every friend of Missions should be grateful.

The early introduction of Christianity into India.

Many ages have elapsed since Christianity was first brought to India. In the South there is a large body called the Syrian Christians, the descendants of those who embraced the Christian faith, if not in primitive times, in all probability in times not much later. The Portuguese led the way in coming to India by the Cape of Good Hope, and for a long period they maintained among European nations the pre-eminence in the Indian field. While bent on dominion and wealth, often they were eager, and we must add, unscrupulous proselytisers. Both force and bribes, as we have already mentioned, were freely used to bring the Natives within the fold of the Church. We need not wonder that many thousands avowed themselves Christians, and their descendants form the great mass of Roman Catholic Christians down to our day. Early in the eighteenth Century,

Recent efforts.

Danish Protestant Missionaries commenced their work in the South, and towards the end of the Century the Baptists of England entered on their labours in the North. Since that time the work has been prosecuted with varying zeal and success. For the history of Indian Missions, the various Churches that conduct them, the methods employed, the effects produced, their successes, failures, toils, and sufferings, the reader, if he

wish for information, must betake himself to works published by Missionaries, and the friends of Missions.

What is the present state of Indian Missions? What have they to show in the way of results? For an answer to these questions we can confidently direct our readers to the volume published by the Allahabad Missionary Conference and to the Statistical Tables, drawn up at the suggestion of the Calcutta Missionary Conference by Messrs. Shackell and Sherring, and bound up with it. The information is of the most recent date, and of the most reliable nature. The various means employed are detailed and freely discussed. The statistics at the end of the volume are of special value. They are given in such detail, that if any doubt arise it can almost be as easily tested as a census return, where the population of every village is recorded. We are surprised this volume has received so little attention from those leaders of public opinion, who freely discuss Mission questions, and who confidently assert what these facts, laboriously gathered, contradict.

The present state of Indian Missions.

The general results, as stated in the volume, can be given in a few lines :—

	Native Christians.	Communi- cants.	Ordained Native Ministers.	Pupils in Schools.	European and Amer- ican Mis- sionaries.	General results.
1861	138,731	21,976	97	75,975	478	
1871	224,161	52,813	226	122,372	486	

Of the 122,372 pupils, 26,611 are young women and girls. During the year 1871 the sum of 85,121 Rs. is reported as subscribed by Native Christians for Church and Missionary objects. This contrasts very favourably with the sum of 93,438 Rs. contributed from 1851 to 1861. It is obvious however that these returns were very imperfect.

From the above statement it appears that the Native Christian community, connected with Protestant Missions, has been

increased to the extent of 85,430 persons, during the ten years from 1861 to 1871, which is at the rate of 61 per cent. Communicants and ordained Native Ministers have increased in a still higher ratio.

Including Ceylon and Burmah the returns in 1872 stand thus :—

Native Christians.	Communi- cants.	Ordained Native Ministers.	Native Contributions.
318,363	74,494	381	159,124 Rs.

At present there are 24 Mission Presses in India, Ceylon, and Burmah. During the last ten years these have published no fewer than 3,410 separate books, mostly of a Christian and educational character, in 31 languages and dialects.

Zenana and Female Medical Missions have been recently commenced with prospects of great usefulness.

A prominent place ought to be given to the fact that of the 85,430 Natives added to the Protestant Churches of India during the last ten years three-fourths are from low-caste and aboriginal tribes, making the increase from the Hindoos proper of a little more than 20,000.

Those who deny that Indian Missionaries are making progress must either ignore these facts, or question their accuracy. It is easy and common to ignore them, but we believe it is impossible to assail them with success. They have been gathered with a conscientiousness and a care, and have been placed before the public in a form, which would have been certainly eschewed by those, who wished either to conceal or pervert the truth. While those facts stand, they confute the often made statement that no progress has been made.

Thus far statistics guide us, but there are great questions, on which they throw no light, such for instance, as the character of Native Christians, and the nature and extent of Missionary influence on the Native mind.

The character of The character of the Native Christians is very much what we might expect from our acquaintance with human nature.

from our knowledge of the training they have received, and of the influences, to which they have been exposed. We find among them great differences in position, in education, and in character. Some have a respectable competence, very few have attained any thing like wealth, while the vast majority supply their wants in a very moderate way by daily toil. Some have been highly educated, while many were grossly ignorant, till they came under Christian instruction, and still possess little intelligence. What shall we say on the still more important subject of character? It would be marvellous indeed, if among the Native Christian community, most worthless persons could not be found. There are such. Can Europeans on this account with a good grace throw stones at the whole community? There are many imperfections and weaknesses in the Native Christians, which we might be prepared to see. Regarding not a few we may doubt if there be living piety. May not the doubt be extended to many Europeans, who have been brought up in far more favourable circumstances? Regarding many it can be truly said that their general conduct is accordant with their profession, making the necessary abatement for human imperfection. We can go still further. Every one well acquainted with the Christian community knows several, whom he can highly esteem, and warmly love, as Christian brethren, striving to do their Lord's will, and to follow His example in all things.

We have mentioned that Native Christians in India, in 1871, contributed above £8,000 for Church and Mission objects. If the returns had been complete, this sum would no doubt have been considerably increased. When we consider the extremely small income of the great majority, we look on this sum as indicating a large measure of liberality. It is impossible to ascertain the sum given by Europeans for these objects, but considering their greatly superior means we have a strong impression their liberality, as a whole, falls far below that of Native Christians.

Another question, on which statistics fail us, is the effect of Missions in weakening the prevailing religions, and in disposing the mind towards Christianity. Some from a wide acquaintance with the Native community, and from a close

Native
Chris-
tians.

Native
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liberality.

The in-
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observation of facts, are in a far superior position than others for arriving at a right conclusion on this subject. The standpoint from which the question is regarded has however much more to do with the opinion formed, than the amount of information possessed. Some are longing for the Christianization of the people, and as they strain their eyes to get the first glimpse of the much wished-for change, they may think they see that which does not exist, while others, who either deprecate the change, or at least are indifferent to it, have full in view the facts, which prove the great strength of the Native religions, and pay no heed to facts, which though not so palpable, indicate the presence of a new and powerful influence. Even when the stand point is the same, temperament will cause a great difference of opinion, the sanguine and the hopeful turning to the bright side, and making it brighter than it is, while the desponding so dwell in the shadow of the dark side, that they can scarcely discern even a streak of light.

It cannot we think be reasonably doubted that much more has been done, than statistics can declare. Many thousands have acquired an acquaintance with the leading doctrines and facts of the Bible, and are impressed with the reasons presented for regarding it as the Word of God, though they shrink from the thought of losing their social position by entering the Christian Church. Even where little is known regarding the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, and the grounds on which it rests, many have the impression it is destined to triumph over all other religions. Missionaries in their different localities, in different degrees, according to their character and opportunities, maintain friendly intercourse with the people, and strive to show them kindness. They have thus secured a high place in the esteem, and we may say in the affection, of many Natives. Is it possible, for instance, for so many thousands of young persons to be in daily contact with Missionaries, without a drawing towards them? Is it possible for the people to know that Missionaries are ready to shield them from wrong, and to remedy their grievances, to the utmost of their power, without being grateful? Is it possible for the sick and their friends to forget Medical Missionaries, and those too not called Medical, who are bent

on curing disease, and relieving suffering? Is it possible for Missionaries to enter, as they often do, into free and friendly conversation with the people, and to treat them as brethren, aiming, so far as they can, to rise above national and social distinctions, without securing some favour for the doctrine they teach of a common fatherhood, and a universal brotherhood?

These views of the effect produced by Missions on the Native mind are confirmed by the very interesting Report on the material and moral progress of India in 1871, 72, drawn up by Mr. Markham of the Indian Office, and printed by order of Parliament. We are sorry we can quote only a few sentences from Mr. M's just and generous testimony. "The large body of European and American Missionaries settled in India bring their various moral influences to bear upon the country with the greater force, because they act together with a compactness, which is but little understood. * * The labours of the Missionaries assume many forms. Apart from their special duties as public preachers and pastors, they constitute a valuable body of educators; they contribute greatly to the cultivation of the native languages and literature, and all who are resident in rural districts are appealed to for medical aid to the sick. No body of men pays greater attention to the study of the native languages than the Indian Missionaries." Mr. Markham pays a high tribute to the Native Christian communities. He proceeds, "No statistics can give a fair view of all that the Missionaries have done. They consider that their distinctive teaching, now applied to the country for many years, has powerfully affected the entire population. The moral tone of their teaching is recognised and highly approved by multitudes, who do not follow them as converts. * * * The government of India cannot but acknowledge the great obligation under which it is laid by the benevolent exertions made by these 600 Missionaries, whose blameless example and self-denying labours are infusing new vigour into the stereotyped life of the great populations placed under English rule, and are preparing them in every way to be better men and better citizens in the great empire in which they dwell. * * The Catholic Missions in India are efficiently

Mr. Mark-
ham's
statement.

continued, but they are almost entirely confined to their Christian converts, and have little to do with the non-Christian population."

Other forces at work.

Entirely apart from Christian Missions there are forces at work in this land, which cannot but tell on the Native community, however inert and conservative it may be. Our Government felt, even when not perceived, throughout every portion of the Empire, the intercourse more or less intimate with officials and others, which springs from our position, the innumerable points in which we come into contact, our commerce, our Railways, and our educational establishments must tend to the moving of the Native mind, and the relaxation of caste itself, stronger though it be than fetters of brass.

Brahmism.

We must not fail to notice one remarkable movement, which has attracted much attention, and is regarded with very different feelings. The Brahmist movement is one that might have been expected among young Hindoos, brought into contact with the knowledge, the civilization, and the Christianity of the West. Eclecticism is a work to which the youthful, vigorous, self-confident mind has ever been disposed. In this case the result is that the ancestral superstition is despised, and the lessons of Christianity are accepted, so far as they commend themselves to reason and intuition. We see throughout the influence of Christianity, even when submission to it is earnestly repudiated. We have come too little into contact with Brahmists to entitle us with any confidence to attempt an answer to the questions, What is the general character of the Brahmists? What is the extent of their influence? Are they a help or hindrance to the Missionary cause? It cannot be supposed or doubted that in the mean time the influence is hurtful rather than beneficial. Educated young men, after leaving the religion of their fathers, find in Brahmism a convenient halting place, which they think they can turn into a comfortable home. The claims of Christianity are disallowed, and its distinctive doctrines opposed. The terrible ordeal of Christian baptism is escaped. Notwithstanding its immediate prejudicial bearing, we cannot but hope that in the end much good will come out of the movement. Of one thing we are sure. Such an indefinite invertebrate system has no perma-

nence. When the flush of novelty is gone, its adherents must go back to Hindooism, or forward to Christianity, or slide into downright Atheism.

We have thus set before our readers the direct and indirect results of Indian Missions, so far as we have been able to ascertain them. The question, Are we satisfied with these results? Have the Hindoos and Musalmans, to the extent of our expectation, been converted to the faith of Christ? Are the present prospects of the evangelistic enterprise as bright as could be hoped for? we think few would be inclined to answer in the affirmative. We suppose every one interested in the work has looked for more signal success than has been achieved. Every now and then it has looked as if Hindooism were tottering to its fall, and as if a movement were beginning, which would bring thousands within the pale of the Church, but the old system has re-appeared with its wonted stability, and the movement has passed away with as little result as a cloud in a summer sky. When year after year has passed, and only one here and there of the Hindoo community has professed to receive the faith of Christ, the chill of disappointment has come down on many a heart, and all hope would have been extinguished, had not the hope of success been kindled from a sacred fire, which vicissitudes and temporary failures cannot reach. Discouragement has been somewhat counteracted by indications here and there visible of a coming change, but there has not been enough in these indications to sustain the confidence of the soul, had they not been aided by something vastly more re-assuring than them all.

Are the
results
satisfac-
tory?

Why has not more been done? Why has not the Christian community increased more rapidly, and attained a more commanding position? We have already referred to the indifference, and hostility of many Europeans, but the question may here be rightly put, Are the Missionaries exempt from blame? We are far from thinking they have been all they ought to have been, or have done all they ought to have done. If they had been more imbued with the spirit of their Master, if their prayerfulness, zeal, activity, self-denial, love, and wisdom had been more worthy of their office, and had been brought to bear on every department of their work, we can.

Why has
not more
been done?

not doubt, as God accomplishes His purposes by suitable means, that their success would have been greater. While they have reason to be thankful for what has been accomplished, they have no reason to regard themselves with self-complacency, or to be satisfied with the past. As little reason have those to be self-complacent, who though not Missionaries feel themselves bound, because they are Christians, to support the Missionary enterprise, and openly to declare their interest in its aims. We cannot suppose a single friend of Missions thinks his prayers for success have been as fervent, his sympathy as deep, his interest as warm and sustained, his efforts in his own sphere as great, his avowed desire for success as marked, and his contributions as liberal, as they ought to have been, in a work commanded by his Lord and Saviour, and deemed by Him so great, that for its success He died on the cross, and now wields all power in heaven and on earth. We cannot doubt that blame attaches to both Missionaries and their friends, and the more they see their past defects, the more likely they are to see future progress.

What ought to be done to secure greater efficiency?

What ought to be done to secure greater efficiency? Ought Missionaries to adopt an entirely new course of life, and to revolutionize their modes of operation? We do not doubt that a change to the better can be effected both in their life and plans, but we do not look in this direction for the triumph of Christianity. The merits of the various plans adopted for bringing the Gospel to bear on different classes have been largely discussed. We feel no call to re-open the discussion, as we are convinced that in so wide and varied a field, there ought not to be a dead level of operation, and that every well-devised plan deserves encouragement and aid. It is more than time to abandon the narrowness, which would confine all Missionary labourers to one groove of working, and which would doom all who leave it, if not to ostracism, at least to depreciation and want of sympathy. Let every one labour in the way, which his position demands, and for which he is best adapted, only keeping steadily in view the one great object of Missionary effort, and while doing all he can within his own sphere, let him take a hearty interest in all genuine work, however different it may be from his own. Let no un-

wise conservatism stand in the way of change either in our mode of life, or plans of operation, whenever good reasons for a change can be advanced. Let us not however be given to change, as if that, in itself, would conduct us to success. For instance, Missionaries are continually urged to give a higher place to Native agency. Is there a Missionary in the land, who is not impressed with its great importance? Is there one who does not believe that it is by such agency India is to be mainly evangelized? The great increase of the Native Christian Ministry is perhaps the most promising item in the statistics of the last ten years. The active, able, and intelligent part taken by Native brethren at the great Allahabad Conference gave exceeding pleasure to their brethren from the West. Even here however there may be more haste than good speed, as every one well acquainted with the work is aware. If Native agency be sometimes unduly discouraged, it is also easy to put on it a strain, which it cannot stand.

We do not believe that any change in plans, however great and beneficial, will bring the nations of India to the feet of Christ. Let the Christians of Europe and America, who supply both the men and means for the Missionary enterprise, rise to its greatness, put forth efforts more commensurate with its unutterable importance, give it more of their heart and sympathy, and pray more fervently for its success; let the Missionaries be imbued with stronger faith, warmer love, and livelier hope, and labour in the strength, which these graces impart; let Christians in India show themselves identified with a work, so bound up with the glory of their Lord, and the salvation of their fellow-creatures; let all who feel this work to be Christ's far more than it can be that of His followers, give it their earnest, steady, and prayerful support; and then most formidable though the difficulties be, arising on the one hand from the institutions and character of the people, and on the other hand from the worldliness and ungodliness of the mass of professing Christians in India, by the Divine blessing large success may be confidently expected at no distant day. This higher character of all engaged and interested in the work will no doubt lead to a more simple self-denying life, to more vigorous and persevering effort, and to a modification of the

plans now pursued, and the change, because charged with spiritual power, may be expected to tell most effectively on the people. To this revived piety, and to the descent of God's Spirit in answer to prayer, we look for the Christianization of India.

Criticism of Missions by the Press, and in society.

So far as we have proceeded in this Essay, our aim has been to present the claims, condition, and prospects of Christian Missions, with as little reference as possible to the criticism, to which they are often subjected. We have not however forgotten such criticism, and we should do great injustice to our theme by leaving it unnoticed. By considering the views expressed by the Press, and continually coming out in society, we shall have an opportunity not only for confirming our statements, but for presenting in other aspects the grounds of Missionary policy and action.

It would be foolish to claim for Missions exemption from the expression of public opinion, and if called for, of public censure. They aim at effecting a great moral, and on that account to a large extent a social revolution. The enterprise is public, presents its salient facts to the public view, and asks for public aid. In our age, when public affairs of every description are so freely discussed, we are not only to expect, but ought to wish for the expression of the views held on this point by the community around. The day has gone by for regarding Missions so sacred, that from them every outside eye should be averted, and about them every tongue should be silent. Even when the views expressed are unsound, we may in various ways be benefitted by them. However free criticism may be, if fairness be maintained, we ought not to conclude it has been dictated by hostility. There may be appreciation of the work, and an honest desire for its success, while the modes adopted may be questioned, and even condemned. Missionaries themselves have often differed widely in opinion, and have not been sparing in their censure of methods they deemed unwise. For instance how often have schools and preaching been pitted against each other, and how many hard words have been uttered on both sides—words, which we hope will not be heard again! Criticism in itself then ought to be welcomed rather than resented.

Every now and then letters and articles on Missions appear in the Newspapers, which it requires no great exercise of charity to accept as coming from a friendly feeling, even when censure is expressed. From ignorance, from want of judgment, and it may be from defective zeal, Missionaries commit mistakes, and every suggestion should be welcomed, which points them to wiser measures. They have reason to regret that useful suggestions are so seldom made.

Criticism has a double value, when we see the stand-point from which it is taken. Fighting in the bush is very unsatisfactory. The rank vegetation, hiding the combatants, was felt to be almost as great a difficulty as the sickly climate, in our late war with the Ashantees. No aim can be taken, when the enemy is unseen. When writers condemn Missions, and Missionaries, what do they really mean? Is the Missionary enterprise in itself right and good? Ought it to be prosecuted? Does it deserve success? If in itself it be praiseworthy, but the measures it adopts be inexpedient and unwise, what are the better modes the critics would suggest? If on the other hand the enterprise be objectionable, on what grounds is it condemned? Was it disapproved by Christ and His Apostles? Is it opposed to the spirit and letter of Christianity? We have glanced at the abundant proof presented of its being not only accordant with Christianity, but of its being directly commanded by Christ, and bound up with His glory and reign. If that proof cannot be gainsaid, ought not the opponents of Missions in all honesty to give up the Christian name, and openly to declare that they oppose Missions, because they oppose Christianity? It is sad that any should take such a position, but when it is actually occupied, there is great advantage in its being known and avowed.

Missionaries and their critics might be expected to agree in their appreciation of truthfulness and fairness. Truthfulness requires us to make ourselves acquainted with facts bearing on the subject on which we express our opinion, and to abstain from random statements, while fairness requires us to guard against distorting and discolouring facts to bring them into accord with preconceived notions, and make them a vehicle for the utterance of our dislikes. When reading some strictures

Criticism has a double value, when its stand-point is seen.

The value in criticism of truthfulness and fairness.

on Missions we have been struck with the little attention paid to these requirements of a truthful spirit.

In conversation opinions are not infrequently expressed, which could not by possibility be held, if attention had been paid to facts, which could be most easily ascertained. We have known the very reality of Missions to be doubted in large stations, where the doubters had long resided, and where Missionary work had been vigorously carried on for years. Not infrequently is it asserted that next to nothing is being done, and nothing has been effected, when in fact much effort in various forms is being put forth, and palpable results have been secured. People often judge by what is being done in their own immediate neighbourhood, at which they give only a glance, and take no pains to make themselves acquainted with the general features of the Missionary field.

The views expressed by some portions of the Press are equally crude and incorrect. We have already referred to the volume recently published by the Allahabad Missionary Conference. It abounds with minute information regarding Missionary work as carried on in all parts of India. The work bound up with it contains the most complete statistics of Indian Missions ever furnished. We might have supposed that writers on Missions for the Press would have possessed themselves of so authoritative a production, and have given it a careful perusal. We might have expected them to have exposed inaccuracies, if discovered. Instead of doing this, some writers, with the air of thorough knowledge, confidently express the most sweeping opinions, while it is evident they have not even glanced at the facts placed immediately before them. There are great German Philosophers and Divines, who think they can work out the history of the world and the Church from their own consciousness, and make short work of the alleged facts, which arrogantly stand in the way of their conclusions. It looks as if some Indian Editors and Newspaper writers thought they could in the same mode settle the condition of Indian Missions.

An illustration of unfairness.

Along with a disregard of facts, there is often the manifestation of great unfairness. When events occur, in which Missions are in any way implicated, it is assumed that Mission-

aries have shown their characteristic narrowness, over-zeal, and folly. The statements which reach the writer are manipulated into weapons for striking these meddlesome men, these troublers of the peace. Truth is travestied, that the Missionaries may be the better hit. This is a severe statement, but is it not correct? An illustration from an Indian Paper will at once explain our meaning, and justify our assertion.

Towards the end of last year a French Missionary and a Native Roman Catholic Priest were murdered by a mob at Szechuen. In the daily Paper published at Allahabad, which has we suppose the widest circulation in the North Western Provinces, there appeared an Editorial on this murder. We give a few sentences. "China Missionaries who get themselves murdered ought to be revenged of course, but it is sad they cannot also be heavily fined,—punished with exemplary severity, forced for instance to attend mass, if they are Protestants, or sit under a Presbyterian, if they are Catholics. Once killed they pass beyond the reach of our indignation,—no matter how recklessly, how criminally they have endangered national interests by an ill-timed display of over-courageous zeal. The moral is that we should keep a tighter hand on China Missionaries before they are murdered." This Editorial prepared us for finding that the murdered men had been chargeable with most culpable imprudence. When we turned to an extract from a China paper, inserted in the same number, giving an account of the disaster, we found to our surprise that the French Missionary and his Native brother had conducted themselves with a prudence, in which not a flaw can be discovered. Their passport from Peking was in perfectly good order. They had bought a house with the express permission of the high authorities of the Province. The people were well-disposed. The local Mandarin had assured them there was nothing to hinder their entering his jurisdiction. The China paper throws all the blame on the Mandarin, to whose instigation the riot is attributed, and instead of drawing the moral that Missionaries should be restrained declares it to be intolerable that treaty rights be thus violated with impunity. The Editorial in the Indian Paper would have been

justified only by its presenting a statement opposed to that furnished by the China Paper.

Soon however an Editorial of a different tenor appeared. The opportunity for hitting at Protestant Missionaries was too good to be lost. We did not copy the words, but we remember well their purport. They were to this effect ; ' Roman Catholic Missionaries, to whom the murdered men belonged, are brave and self-denying. They shrink not from the sacrifice of their lives to advance their cause. They present a contrast to the Protestant Missionaries, who cower in the cities on the coast under the wing of their country-men, will not venture into the interior, and of course have utterly failed to convert the people.' The writer had evidently not heard of the risks often incurred, and of the life actually sacrificed by Protestant Missionaries. He was not aware that one was recently killed, when trying to enter Corea, and that another lost his life in his boat, by the hands of the Chinese, when out on one of their rivers. The name of that noble man Burns was unknown. No information was possessed of the losses incurred, the sufferings borne, and even the death in a number of cases endured by Protestant converts.

These ill-starred Protestant Missionaries cannot indeed by any conceivable conduct escape condemnation. If they go into the interior, and become however innocently the occasion of outbreaks, they are firebrands, and ought to be at once extinguished. If they remain on the coast in the great centres of trade, they are self-indulgent cowardly men, who deserve not a particle of respect. Very recently unmeasured ridicule was poured on the devoted man, who tried to make his way to the Kaffirs of Affghanistan, and who was brought back by order of the British Government, while from the same source comes the censure of ease-loving Missionaries, who will venture nothing for their cause. Missionaries must not however be too much disconcerted. They remember Him, who said, when censure was expressed on opposite grounds, " Wisdom is justified of her children."

In the files of some Indian Newspapers similar instances of unfairness can easily be discovered. We cannot think that a single Missionary in the country could bring himself to treat

with such unfairness those opposed to his views. Not merely as a Christian but as a man he would despise himself for conduct he would deem marked by untruthfulness.

Of all the statements about Missions the one most persistently made is that they are an entire failure. If strong and reiterated assertion could make any thing certain, failure ought to be by this time universally acknowledged. Both in English and Indian Papers it has been ascribed to Protestant Missions all over the world. In vain we point to the South Seas, Southern and Western Africa, the West Indian Islands, and Madagascar, to say nothing of India and China. We are met by the declaration that our information is one-sided and untrue. Trustworthy tidings have been received, which annihilate our vaunted success. Very recently these words appeared in a Calcutta Newspaper, "The utter failure of Christian Missions for any good beyond that of providing comfortable homes for the Missionaries and their families in the Pacific Islands is too well known to need further remark." The Missions have fostered and increased "idleness, sensuality, and depravity." If these things have been really "observed" and truly reported, the inference is plain—Missionaries are the most foolish and wicked of mankind. They have left their Native land, roamed over the great Pacific, taken up their abode among savage, and not infrequently cannibal tribes, have toiled, suffered, and in not a few instances lost their lives—and all to get comfortable homes for themselves—these homes having been raised under their own direction, and in a great measure by their own hands. They are as wicked as they are foolish. Some of the early voyagers in those seas spoke in glowing terms of the Islanders, but the more they were seen, and the better they were known by Captain Cook and his successors, who certainly had no Missionary bias, the less favourable did their testimony become. We ought rather to say that their state was found to be as low and debased, as can be conceived. It seems under Missionary teaching and example they have become much worse! What a loathsome set these Christian Islanders must be, when their heathen ancestors were so bad, and yet were better than they! Strange to say Whalers and others trading in those seas prefer to go to those so-called Christian Islands for supplies and refitting, when

The asserted failure of Missions.

they might go to the Islands yet uncontaminated by Missionary action, and still more strangely such men as Herman Melville and the Earl of Pembroke seem to have felt themselves more at home in them than in the more favoured Islands, where heathenism retains its sway! At the present time some Missionaries have left their comfortable homes in the Christianized Islands, and are endeavouring to establish Missions in the great Island of New Guinea, and the adjacent Islands.* They encounter storms at sea in frail barks, land among uncertain tribes, many of whom are known to be cannibals, visit notoriously unhealthy places, where fever is endemic, and all, if we believe our Calcutta guide, to secure in the end good homes for themselves! A few years hence, when Missions are established, the Missionaries will no doubt be comfortably accommodated. This was the prospect that cheered them all along! Is not the proof before our eyes? We are now prepared to hear that the great object of the Missionary Pioneer Livingston was to find a comfortable home for himself, and those who were to follow him, in the heart of Africa, though instead he lost his life! We must not proceed further in this strain. The words we have quoted, on which we have commented, may prepare us for any statement, however outrageously opposed to facts, by which antipathy to Missions may seek gratification. The literature of the South Sea Missions speaks for itself by the fulness of its information, and the manifest truthfulness of its spirit. The Missionaries have faithfully set forth the evils which exist (if they had reported primitive innocence, we might well be incredulous,) but they have at the same time given proofs of the marvellous change effected, which cannot be successfully gainsaid.

The alleged failure in India,

The alleged failure in India is met by the fact that taking the whole country into account the number of Protestant Native Christians is increasing at a rapidly progressive ratio, as is evident from the carefully drawn up and the minute statistics, to which we have already more than once referred. We

* Information has been very recently received that two Native teachers and their wives, located in one of these Islands, have been murdered by its inhabitants.

object however to numerical increase as the standard by which Missionary success is to be tried. A more fallacious test cannot be conceived. The subject is so important, we may say vital, in its bearing on Missionary efficiency, that we must be allowed to state our views at some length regarding it, and this we can best do by looking at the circumstances, which have in the past brought numbers into the Christian Church.

Thousands have at different times sought and received baptism, simply because their national leaders had gone before them, and the whole tide of feeling was running in that direction. We are told that as soon as Ethelbert, the king of Kent, received baptism from the hands of the Roman Monk Augustine, chiefs and people eagerly followed him. No fewer than 10,000 were baptised in the river Swale in one day. There was no compulsion, for the king declared to his subjects they were at liberty to act as they chose in the matter of religion. The worth, rather the worthlessness, of these wholesale conversions, was shown when Ethelbert's son avowed himself an idolater. Thousands of the baptised abandoned their profession of faith in Christ. When Clovis the fierce and powerful king of the Franks after long hesitation submitted to baptism, crowds of his warriors immediately followed his example. Their new faith was mainly shown by their beating down heretics and infidels, wherever they could get an opportunity of assailing them. In this mode tribe after tribe of the Celtic and Teutonic races entered the Christian Church.

Numbers
no test of
success.

Within the last few years vast numbers have avowed themselves Christians in the Island of Madagascar. Knowing human nature as we do, we cannot suppose these thousands have abandoned idolatry from enlightened conviction. The Queen, the Prime Minister, the Nobles, and the persons of most consideration had gone over to the Christian side, and what could the mass do but go with the stream?

Natural
leaders.

Even where there are no great chiefs to lead the way, human beings are so gregarious, that when a number have embraced a new religion, and it has become popular, it acquires an attractive power, sufficient to secure the adhesion of many who have no intelligent conviction of its excellence. Among the Shanars, the Kols, and the Santals of India, and the

Popular
feeling.

Karens of Burmah, there are no doubt many true Christians, but as the number of professing Christians has increased in these communities, we cannot doubt many will join them mainly because their relatives and neighbours have done so before them.

This then is one mode in which the Christian Church has been enlarged. The leaders of society have avowed themselves Christians, and the multitude have been won by their example. Where there are not leaders of mark, the popular feeling has set in towards the profession of Christianity, and has borne many with it, who if left to themselves would have remained where they were. A community has often thus come under new and improving influences, but conversions of this class cannot be reckoned of a high order.

**Worldly
advan-
tage.** Another incitement to the profession of Christianity has been the prospect of worldly advantage. Missionaries labouring among barbarous and semi-barbarous tribes, as in the South Seas and in Africa, have introduced the arts of civilized life, and set the people on a course of indefinite improvement. Such tangible benefits have warmly commended the Christianity so closely connected with them, and have no doubt been very efficacious in securing professed adherents. Missionaries every where are bound to promote the temporal good of those, among whom they dwell, to the utmost of their ability, in every way open to them, and the influence thus obtained may be most rightly wielded for winning the people to a favourable hearing of their message.

Bribes. Unhappily in not a few cases the influence of a benevolent and useful life has been considered too uncertain and feeble in its operation, and resort has been had to the offering of bribes. Money, office, honour, and power have been held out to induce an entrance into the Christian Church, while those who have not accepted these bribes have been made to feel in their position and purse, that they were under the cloud of official displeasure, although perhaps not subject to direct persecution. We are sorry to say, that the most notable instance of bribery, as an instrument for converting the heathen to Christianity, with which we are acquainted, was presented by a Protestant nation, conducting Missions in its national ca-

pacify. We refer to the Dutch in Ceylon. About the middle of the 17th Century, on expelling the Portuguese from their possessions in the Island, they set themselves to the overthrow of both Popery and Heathenism. The Roman Catholic Priests were deported, and Roman Catholic worship was in every possible way discouraged. The temples of the heathen could not be safely shut, but a proclamation was issued, that no official favour could be expected by those who continued to frequent them. Orders were issued against the erection of any new temple. Baptism became the passport to place under the new government. Candidates for government employment must not only be baptised, but must sign the Helvetic Confession of Faith, and declare themselves members of the Reformed Church. The part of the Island, which belonged to the Dutch, the interior continuing under Native rule, was divided into 240 parishes. A schoolmaster was appointed over each of these, and over every ten schoolmasters a catechist was placed, schoolmasters and catechists being Natives. In every considerable district there was a Dutch Minister. These Dutch Ministers, only ten or twelve in number, were as a class ignorant of the Vernacular, and spoke to the people through interpreters. The entire expense was of course borne by Government from the taxes of the Colony. The converts were speedily reckoned by thousands. In one district, within five years, there were more than 60,000. In 1722 a Dutch Chaplain reckoned the number of Protestant Native Christians at 424,392. In 1796 when the English expelled the Dutch, they were reckoned at 342,000. With the establishment of our rule, official help and favour were withdrawn, and the structure raised with such care melted away as snow before a thaw. Baptism indeed continued popular for some time, but nothing else pertaining to Christianity could be seen. No Christian worship was maintained. With few exceptions the congregations were dissolved. According to the most recent statistics there are only 31,376 Protestant Native Christians in Ceylon at present, and these are mainly the fruit of Missionary labour in this Century. Are not these 31,376 of the 19th Century a far stronger proof of Missionary success than the 420,000 of the 18th Century?

The use of
force.

Still stronger measures have been adopted to secure the profession of Christianity. While gifts have been in the one hand for those who submit, the sword has been in the other hand to cut down all recusants. In mediæval times, as violent measures were adopted for the propagation of Christianity as were ever employed by Muhammad and his followers for the spread of Islâm. Many noble men, some of whom we have already named, laboured in the most self-denied and zealous manner for the diffusion of the Gospel, and not a few sacrificed their lives, while prosecuting the enterprise, but it cannot be gainsaid that the professed subjection to Christianity of the Scandinavian and Germanic tribes was secured to a very large extent by a resort to the most violent measures. At the end of the 10th Century Olof in the far North fought against idolatry with a fierceness, a pertinacity, and a courage, which have given him a prominent place among those who have wielded the sword to effect religious proselytism. For thirty years Charlemagne contended with the wild heathen Saxons, and the end of every victory was the driving of the conquered to the baptismal waters. The nature of their conversion was shown by their rising against the conquerors, whenever a favourable opportunity presented itself, burning down Churches, murdering ecclesiastics, and pouring scorn on the religion, of which against their will they had received the outward badge.

The union
of moral
and coer-
cive mea-
sures.

In many cases moral and coercive measures were combined, as in the case of Boniface, called the Apostle of Germany, and Otho the Apostle of Pomerania. These were excellent men, and gave themselves heart and soul to the work of instructing and winning the heathen, but when wearied with what seemed to them ineffectual effort they welcomed the sword of the secular arm to effect their object. Boniface with his own hand cut down the sacred oak-tree in Upper Hesse. The powerful aid of Charles Martel and the Frankish chiefs was invoked and obtained. The result we see in the conversion of 100,000 in the course of a few years. Otho went to Pomerania, accompanied by the envoys of the Dukes of Poland and Pomerania. These were charged to tell the people in the name of their Masters that refusal to receive baptism at the hands of Otho would be at their peril. Need we wonder to read that

vast numbers at once entered the Church—that at one place within a few days 7000 were baptised? Even at that period there were persons, who protested against such measures as anti-Christian, such as the Abbot Aleuin, who remonstrated with Charlemagne and his courtiers for the violent measures they employed to effect conversions.

In a previous part of this Essay we glanced at the Missions to the heathen of the Church of Rome since the Reformation. These have been conducted in the mediæval spirit. The pressure which only persons in authority can bring upon a people has been welcomed, whenever it could be obtained. This has been especially the case with the Jesuit Missions. We need not wonder at the numbers they secured in Southern India and elsewhere.

We have stated these facts to show that mere numbers are no test of Missionary success. Bribes and force as means for converting the heathen are utterly repugnant to the principles and policy of Protestant Missions. Stubborn human nature, bent on its evil ways, seems to need something more immediately potent than moral suasion to impel it in the right direction, and even Protestant Missionaries have at times been tempted, no doubt, to desire the aid which human authority can give, but both their principles and their position have happily deterred them from resorting to such means. Their success in securing converts, if on that account more limited, is of a vastly higher order. Conversions effected in such different modes cannot be rightly compared, though they may be contrasted. Here and there at the present time, in Mis-

Moral
courage
shown by
a minority.

sions, where the numbers are very small, there are individuals, who bear much more striking testimony to the success of the Missionary enterprise than thousands of converts made in mediæval times, and even than crowds in our own day, who have entered the Christian Church in the wake of their friends and countrymen. Solely in obedience to conscience, to unite one self to a very unpopular minority in the face of domestic and social proscription, often at a heavy pecuniary loss, with the certainty of incurring immeasurable and unjust reproach, and with the likelihood of being scowled on by European Christians, is an instance of moral courage and of

real success, which ought to command admiration. Is it not plain that conversions must be weighed, not numbered? Is not this allowed by those who are fond of proving failure by the fewness of converts? It is very hard to please these critics, and we suspect impossible to satisfy them. Are converts few? 'Is not failure manifest?' Are converts many? 'They are utterly worthless—often worse than they were,' as is alleged regarding South Sea Islanders, and Africans, and as is often said about converts in India. Abundance of chaff does not prove the presence of wheat. Here indeed we are in a dilemma, from which there seems no escape. Here again we would reverently fall back on the words, "Wisdom is justified of her children."

No Those who are ever harping on the failure of Missions, take account taken of preparatory work. no account of their preparatory work, and indirect influence. With them the laying of the foundation and the gathering of the materials are nothing. They demand the sight of the completed structure. When the harvest has been reaped they will believe the ground has been ploughed, and the seed sown—but not before.

If Missions be a failure, Christianity is a failure. It may be said however, that we ourselves have acknowledged failure. Have we not acknowledged that converts are comparatively few, especially among the Muhammadans and pure Hindoos, that they are not so high-minded and consistent, as they ought to be, that the people generally are firmly attached to their ancestral religions, and have no disposition to abandon them? Have we not said that the success of the Missionary enterprise in India has not come up to our expectation? This we have said, and continuing in the same strain we now say, that the progress of Christianity in the world has not been what might have been anticipated in the days of the Apostles, or, to come down to a much lower period, in the days of the Reformation. The progress of Christianity has been very slow and chequered. It has met with many a reverse. Has it been a failure? There are persons ready to maintain it has been, and they can do this with at least as much appearance of truth, as those who assert the failure of Missions. In a country like India there is much to sadden every Christian heart. But what is the state of so-called

Christendom? What have we to say to the dark spots everywhere visible? Have we not much before our eyes to grieve and surprise us? The character of so-called Christian nations, and even of our own countrymen in India, may be cited as a stronger proof of the failure of Christianity, than the small number of converts in India and their imperfect character can be in support of the assertion that Missions have failed. But neither the one nor the other can fail, whatever discomfiture appearances may suggest. Christianity is of God, and because of God it must triumph in the end. It must spread all over the earth and bring all nations under its sway. To say this is to say that the Missionary enterprise will be crowned with complete success.

Missionaries are not infrequently counselled as to the more efficient prosecution of their work. Let us ponder some of these counsels. Counsels.

They are not infrequently told they preach obsolete dogmas, and a new edition of Christianity has been recommended, from which every thing hitherto deemed distinctive of Christianity has been carefully eliminated. To this they can only reply that in common with many thousands, perhaps a greater number than at any previous period of the world's history, what are called obsolete dogmas are firmly grasped by them as living and life-giving truths. In the past and present they know these truths have been and are the great means for turning men to God and goodness. Innumerable have been the testimonies given to their power. What has this new edition of Christianity done? Where are its Missions? What are its achievements? For a long period in Europe and America many have held views substantially agreeing with those now recommended to us as Christianity, free from its excrescences. Not a few have been persons of intelligence, of integrity, of benevolence, and of high social standing. What have they done for the heathen? It is a notorious fact, that their principal work has been to criticize what has been done by others. Take away the plain teaching of the Bible about man's guilt and depravity, his need of a Saviour, the Divinity and propitiatory sacrifice of our Lord, and the necessity of faith in Him, and you take away all motive to

'Cease to
preach
obsolete
dogmas.'

Missionary work. The adherents of the improved form of Christianity ought then not to say to us, 'Embrace our views, and preach them to the heathen,' but 'Embrace our views, and like us leave the heathen to themselves. In the long run it will be as well with them, as with us.' If Missions are to be kept up, it is clear they are to be sustained only by those who cling to the faith of God's Church in all ages.*

'Lead an
ascetic
life.'

Again, Missionaries are charged with leading an easy luxurious life. They occupy good houses, and have conveniences and comforts, like their European neighbours. We are told that this is fatal to their success—that they should fight Hindooism with its own weapons, cast off their European habits, practise austerities, and thus show in their own person the superiority which Christianity gives to the spirit over the flesh.

On this proposal we observe, 1st—Protestant Missions profess to be based on the teaching of the Bible, especially of the New Testament. If it can be proved from the Bible that asceticism is a duty imposed on those who give themselves to evangelistic work, we have no doubt the duty will be discharged. But is asceticism a feature of Bible religion? We cannot find a trace of it. We are required to lead unworldly, self-denying, and holy lives, but neither in the way of precept nor example do we find a word to favour ascetic practices in regard to abode, food, clothing, or any thing else. The Apostles and first preachers of the Gospel suffered much, and so have

* We have read with care Professor Max Muller's Missionary address delivered in Westminster Abbey. It is interesting, but surely very unsatisfactory. Expressions occur indicative of the Professor's belief in the superiority of Christianity, but there is not a word to answer the great questions, What is Christianity? Wherein does it differ from other religions? Has it a Divine message to the nations? Has it any definite distinctive teaching? Is there any guarantee for its final success? If those engaged in this work had only the guidance and stimulus the learned Professor gives them, we fear their zeal would soon evaporate, and the enterprise would be soon abandoned. He says, "The three religions, which are alive, and between which the decisive battle for domination of the whole world will have to be fought are the three Missionary religions, Buddhism, Muhammadanism, and Christianity." Few Christians will derive much comfort from the mere fact that Christianity is one of the three great claimants for the world's faith, while they are not told it is entitled to that faith, and sure to succeed. If we are to believe what we hear, Buddhist countries are at present the most religiously dead in the world, and their Missionary zeal is a thing of the past.

many Christians done since, but they did not go forth in search of suffering and privation, however cheerfully they bore these, when providentially exposed to them. Missionaries wish to walk in their steps.

2nd.—A comfortable subsistence is what Societies propose to give to their agents. In a country with the severe climate of that of India such support implies more than is needed in countries with a milder climate. Societies and their agents are like others liable to mistakes, but when the incomes of Missionaries are compared with those of Europeans in military, civil, and commercial life, with an uncertain pittance awaiting them, if their life be prolonged, beyond their ability to work, it will be seen that Missionary salaries are on a scale so moderate, that they cannot be lowered, if the habits ordinarily indispensable to the health of Europeans in this country be maintained. As Missionaries are more stationary than most Europeans; and as they expend nothing on things on which many of their countrymen spend much, a casual look at their dwellings often gives an impression the opposite of the reality. Missionaries no doubt need to improve in self-denial, as in other things, but we have no hesitation in saying that an entirely different mode of life, from that which they have adopted, would be deeply injurious to their usefulness. We wonder how many of their critics would be willing to exchange places with them in regard to income present and prospective.

3rd.—This demand for an ascetic life proceeds on the supposition that Missionaries be celibates. No one thinks that women ought to subject themselves to such austerities. There are circumstances in which celibacy is no doubt favourable to Missionary efficiency, and peculiarly dangerous and trying spheres have been often filled by unmarried men, but nature, Scripture, and experience condemn the imposition of celibacy on any as an obligatory and permanent arrangement. Christian women can do a vast amount of most useful work, which men alone can never attempt. In many instances Missionaries' wives have been as useful as their husbands. The heathen need to witness the order, peace, and purity of Christian families, and this most essential part of Christian life is in Mis-

monary families presented to their view in a form, which has a quiet but powerful influence for good.

4th.—The error that asceticism is religion seems deeply engrained in human nature, and has taken a firm hold of the Hindoo mind. In mediæval times, and with many down to our own day, the notion has prevailed among professing Christians, that the religious are those who separate themselves from others to wait on God, who continually perform sacred service, and endure self-imposed privation and suffering, while others, whatever their character, are only secular. According to the Bible those are religious or godly, who live above the world, and are ruled by holiness and love, while living in the world, discharging its duties, and maintaining its relationships. Godliness pervading daily life is the religion, which the Bible enjoins. By the practice of self-denial and love we act a Christian part, and commend the Gospel. By the practice of asceticism we should only confirm the Hindoos in one of their most destructive errors.

5th.—If Missionaries ought to be ascetics, it is plain Christians of every class are bound to follow them. Ministers and Missionaries have an official position in the Church, which others have not, but there is not a word in Scripture to show, that in character, aim, and general course of life, there ought to be a difference. We are distinctly taught that all true Christians form one community, and are laid under the same obligations. Christ has done for one, what He has done for all, and all are therefore bound to glorify Him in their body and spirit, which are His. Paul was a great Missionary. He says once and again to his brethren, 'Be ye followers of me.' If he then were an ascetic, it is plain that Christians in Thessalonica, Corinth, Rome, and other places ought to have been ascetics too. Timothy, as a son of Paul in the Gospel, was mainly a Missionary. Paul instructs him to be an example to believers, which obviously implies that they should walk in his steps. If the critics of Missionaries avow themselves Christians, they see what awaits them. If Missionaries are to pursue the high path of self-denial even to asceticism, their critics ought not to escape the yoke they think so befitting. If Missionaries go before, they must not be far behind.

On this whole subject we are satisfied there is much illusion. Illusion
regarding
devoted-
ness.
A man plunging into a heathen land, parting with the refinement and conveniences of civilized life, partaking of the fare, and occupying the abodes of the rude people, to whom he has gone, takes hold of the imagination, and in many cases draws forth rightful admiration. Those know little of Protestant Missionaries, who suppose they have furnished no examples of such heroic self-devotion. They have not thought indeed there was any excellence in a mere rude, barbarous life. They have rather deemed it a barrier to growth in knowledge and moral worth. They have therefore put forth vigorous effort to provide themselves with better accommodation, when time and opportunity have been given them, and under the impulse thus given, the people whom they have gone to benefit have had a new ambition awakened,*which has told most favourably on their character and condition. The longer however this work is carried on, the less romance it has, and the less praise it receives. If the Missionary were seen at first among a barbarous people his position would be full of interest, but what can be more prosaic than his being found in a comfortable dwelling surrounded by pleasant-looking cottages?

In the Plains of India, in Burnah, and China, there is no place for this phase of Missionary life, but we believe as true Missionary heroism has been displayed in these countries, as in any part of the world. From day to day, from week to week, from year to year, to prosecute one's work amidst difficulty, discouragement, and not infrequent disappointment; to advance in the face of the stolidity and opposition of heathenism, and amidst the ill-concealed sneers of one's own countrymen; to persist in the work, because God's work, with the assurance that He approves, and will in the end crown it with success, is a life which has little to arrest ordinary attention, but we have no doubt it stands high in heaven's estimation. Dr. Morrison for more than twenty years toiling at his Chinese Dictionary, Grammar, and translation of the Bible, living during a great part of the period as secluded and confined a life, as if he had been a prisoner; Dr. Carey on the banks of the Hoogly, for forty years, without one visit to the Hills or to England, labouring incessantly on his Indian trans

lations, and with his companions, after reserving a most moderate sum for subsistence, devoting their large income to Missionary purposes; and Dr. Mason, the great Palee scholar, who has just passed away, after more than forty years of noble work, are illustrations of moral heroism, which appear the brighter and more glorious the longer and more closely they are contemplated. Brief lives full of enterprise, privation, and suffering, however admirable they may be, do not attain the same height of moral grandeur. The soldier who through a long tiresome campaign, maintains a cheerful, hopeful spirit, and submits without a murmur to privation and toil, presents a more striking instance of courage than the man, who in the day of battle rushes into the hottest of the fight, and shows no fear.

The money spent on Missions.

One not infrequently hears of the large sums spent on Missions. It would appear from the statements made, that much more is expended than those engaged in the work have any conception of. The sad waste is deplored. 'So much good money thrown away on such a wild impracticable enterprise! It is enough to break one's heart. Only think of what that money would accomplish, if wisely spent!' One cannot keep one's eyes and ears open, without knowing something of the way in which Europeans, as a class, use their money. Go to any large Station you like—learn how much is raised for Missions, (that is soon done,) and then conjecture, as you best can, the sum spent on luxuries and gaieties, and the Missionary scale appears wonderfully light. 'Ah but then people get their money's worth. They have not cast it away on visionary schemes. They are rewarded by the joy and honour they have secured.' It may be shockingly bad taste, and indicate want of sense, but so it is, there are individuals, who look with far more pleasure on money, for which they can show no visible return, than on money which has brought in those highly prized advantages. There are individuals—*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*—who actually deem it a higher honour to fail in a cause like the Missionary enterprise, than to succeed in securing the highest measure of personal indulgence and social consideration.

We often hear that the heathen better remain, as they are.

Why disturb them? 'Are not good heathen better than bad Christians?' Is that the alternative? If it be, we better desist. We are not shut up to that alternative. The Gospel of God's grace, by God's blessing, can make them good Christians, and therefore we address the Gospel to them. The command to make known the Gospel to all was given by Him, whom we are bound to obey, and obedience to the command urges Christians to go forward, but apart from it we believe that knowledge is better than ignorance, that truth is better than falsehood, that moral excellence and motives prompting to its pursuit are better than a low moral state, which ever tends to still deeper debasement—in one word, that the service of the Living God is better than the service of demons and of idols. The deeper our insight into heathenism, and the wider our acquaintance with the effect it produces, the more repulsive it will appear, and the more eager will be our desire that it may be replaced with something infinitely better and higher. We are old fashioned enough to believe that our Teutonic and Celtic forefathers did well in giving up their ancestral religions for Christianity, and that a similar change would bring untold good to the people of this land. Not long ago we heard an Indian Official, who has much to do with the people, maintain that our rule is a curse to them, and that it would have been well, if they had never seen our faces. However that may be—and in the opinion of that Official we certainly do not share—we are sure the direct and proper tendency of Christianity is to promote their temporal and lasting advantage.

Do not Missionaries however take too gloomy a view of a religious system like Hindooism? Are they not tempted to describe both the people and their religion in the darkest terms, that the necessity for evangelistic zeal may be made more apparent? So it has been said, we think unjustly. At any rate we are sure there is no need for exaggeration. Facts evident to all who wish to know the truth give ample testimony to the averments of Sacred Writ, that where no vision is, there the people perish, that the heathen know not God, that they are without God, and without hope in the world. Such men as Dr. Horace Hayman Wilson, Dr. Ballantyne, and Professor Max Muller, whom none will charge with Missionary bias, have writ-

'The heathen better remain as they are.'

The Missionary view of heathenism.

ten more strongly against Purānic Hindooism and its effect on its votaries, than any Missionaries, with whose writings we are acquainted. The sacred writings of the Hindoos indeed testify more strongly against their religion than anything which can be said by its open adversaries.

The disturbance caused by Missionary success,

But then, if Christianity succeed in enlisting converts, may it not cause deep social disturbance, and excite dangerous political tumult? All we can reply to this is that no change, however beneficial, has ever occurred, without offending some classes, and producing an unpleasant stir. To secure perpetual peace there must be no change of any kind, and human beings must remain for ever, as they are. Would the world be the better of such stagnation? As to the change, which Christianity effects, we may quote the words of two distinguished men, one of the last Century, and the other of this. On the parable of the woman sweeping the floor for her lost piece of silver one quietly remarks, "Non sine pulvere," and the other taking up the thought observes, "Where this is done in earnest, what a deranging of the house for a time! how does the dust, which had been allowed to settle down and accumulate, begin to rise and fly about in every direction, how unwelcome that which is going forward to any that may be in the house, and have no interest in the finding of that which has been lost! The charge against the Gospel is still the same, that it turns the world upside down, even as indeed it does. (Act. xvii, 6). * * * But amidst all this, while others are making outcry about the dust and inconvenience, she that bears the candle of the Lord is diligently looking meanwhile for her lost, not ceasing her labour, her care, her diligence, till she has recovered her own again."

The postponement of the work,

As the work is confessedly so difficult, and the progress so slow, some are ready to propose that it ought to be postponed to a more favourable season. This would be in effect to say that for the present, falsehood is stronger than truth, that Satan is stronger than God, that Christ is not and cannot be the Lord of all, and the Saviour of the world. To defer the carrying on of the work among a people providentially open to our efforts is to contravene the plain commands of Christ, and to show a distrust in His grace, which so long as it continues invites

defeat. We remember the curse, which came down on those who said, 'The time is not come' for the building of the Lord's house, while they built coiled houses for themselves, and eagerly sought their worldly ends. We would not incur that curse. The Christian Church has abundant means and full opportunity for prosecuting this enterprise, and the abandonment, even the postponement of it, would bring down swift punishment.

There is one widely prevalent opinion, against which every friend of Missions ought vigorously to protest. We refer to the opinion that this work has been laid on the shoulders of Missionaries only, and that they alone are responsible for its successful prosecution. The teaching of the New Testament brings us to an entirely different conclusion. From it we learn that instead of being committed exclusively to one order of men, it has been entrusted to the entire Church. All Christians are consequently bound to do all they can in their respective spheres to help forward this enterprise, though all cannot like Missionaries give their time and strength to direct immediate effort. To say that Missionaries are alone responsible is to say that in a campaign Officers are alone responsible for fighting and conquering the enemy. We know how little Officers can do without a brave and loyal following. If Missionaries had been considered only leaders, not exclusive agents in this work, would not the results have been different? If all who had come to India, bearing the Christian name, had been Christians, had lived as Christians, and had used all legitimate means for advancing the Gospel, can we suppose India would be at the present day what we see it is? If now all called Christians were to obtain a character, corresponding with the name, would not India be moved from one end to the other? When notwithstanding happy and marked exceptions Missionaries, instead of being helped, are thwarted by many of their countrymen, it is surely unfair to charge them with small results, which, so far as human agency is concerned, are traceable to others, and often in a special degree to those who are loudest in uttering the taunt.

Who are
respon-
sible for
success?

Some of our Christian friends may deem our views too sombre. There was a time, when we ourselves would have so deemed them. We can state things only as they present

Somb
views.

themselves to us. Because we assert the obstacles are so formidable, and the work so backward, the inference must not be drawn that there is nothing left us but hopeless despondency. To doubt of final success would be to abandon our faith in Christ—we may say, our faith in the Living God. There is no use in trying to make facts more pleasant than they are. The despising of an enemy has many a time caused defeat. The more we realize our position, the better prepared shall we be for success. The strength of our foe makes us look only more steadily to our glorious leader, and nothing so sustains us in the cheerful and hopeful prosecution of our work as the realization of His love and power.

We would conclude by referring at once to duty and encouragement.

Our duty. The duty is plain. The command of the Master is on us. Woe be to His Church if the command be not obeyed! This duty is not in the slightest degree dependent on results. If Missions had been an entire failure, if not a single individual had been converted, if there had not been even the slightest indication of coming dawn, our obligation to prosecute the work would remain unaffected. In that case we might conclude there had been something radically wrong in our spirit, and in our mode of procedure, and there would be an urgent call to institute a searching inquiry, but Christ's command, and the consequent obligation, would remain as they are.

Our encouragement. As the duty is manifest, so the encouragement is great. The very command to make known the Gospel is full of encouragement. Would such a Master summon us to an enterprise, which must end in failure? Would such a Leader send us forth to a conflict, where certain defeat awaited us? With such a potent moral instrument in our hands, the state of the world, after all the efforts put forth to renew and reform it by merely human appliances, should urge us forward. The past victories of the Church are well fitted to embolden us. The predictions of God's word may well inspire us with the liveliest hope. Above all, as included in these reasons for encouragement, but deserving of special mention, is the promised aid of God's Spirit in applying the truth to the individual heart and conscience. It is no wonder that the detractors of Missions

and their friends cannot agree. It is no wonder the former confidently predict signal entire failure, while the latter anticipate success. There is an element entirely ignored, entirely unseen by the former, to which the latter attach the utmost importance. It is overlooked even by some who avow themselves the friends of Missions. For instance in the Essay of Professor Max Muller, to which we have referred, there is not the faintest allusion to the work of God's Spirit in the human heart. It was sneeringly said to Dr. Morrison, when he was on his way to China, 'So, you are going to convert China,' to which he replied, 'No, Sir, but God will convert China.' In the letters of Xavier and of Roman Catholic Missionaries we often read of their 'making Christians.' No such expression occurs in the writings of Protestant Missionaries. They have not made themselves Christians. This has been accomplished by God's Spirit, and they know what a great and arduous work it has been. They see plain evidence of the working of the same Spirit on other human hearts, and on it they depend for the renewal of the world. Would that the dependence were more habitual and entire! Often have the great words been spoken, '*Magna est veritas, et prevalebit.*' We heartily accept them, not because truth by its own energy is sure to prevail, but because the God of truth lives, and will give it the victory. The friends of Missions as well as their opponents see the serried ranks of ignorance, superstition, idolatry, and vice, and are well aware of their strength, but like the Prophet in Dothan they see what the others, like the Prophet's servant, do not—the Living God round His people to cheer, sustain, and prosper them. Whatever therefore be the immediate result they know that in the end there will be complete success. The day is coming when "he that soweth and he that reapeth shall rejoice together." "Those sowing with weeping, with singing shall reap. Going he shall go and weep, bearing a load of seed : coming he shall come with singing, bearing sheaves."

NOTE.

The statement made in this Essay regarding the rigidity of caste is strictly correct as to those parts of India, where Hindooism has had for ages uninterrupted sway over the mass of the people. No individual, on account of any

excellence whatever, or for any service whatever, can be admitted into a caste above his own. No one put out of his own caste can be received into an inferior one. We are speaking of the higher and more honoured castes, but we believe the remark is largely applicable to the lower also. In such centres of Hindooism as Benares, Gya, and Muttra, who has heard of a person being made a Brahman, or Chhatree, or even a Sudra? Years ago we knew a respectable Native Doctor at Benares, a Chumar by caste, who secured the good will and confidence of the entire community. Many of the higher castes had no scruple about consulting him as their Medical adviser, but the proposal to admit him within the Hindoo pale was never mooted. As a Chumar, though worshipping the Hindoo Gods, and following Hindoo rites, he was looked on as outside the Hindoo community. His children did not get a step upward in the caste-scale. The proposal to admit them would have been as much scorned by the Brahmans as the proposal that they themselves should become Chumars. Professor Max Muller then states a well-known fact, when he says that Hindooism is a Non-Missionary religion, *if the statement be confined to the established abodes of the Hindoo race*. We have heard of persons of the lower castes in Northern India, sometimes in considerable numbers, and even of an individual now and then of the higher castes becoming Mussalmans, and we know such become Christians, but who has heard of Mussalmans or Christians becoming Hindoos, or being asked to become Hindoos—a very few erratic Englishmen of a former generation excepted, whom the Brahmans on account of their money or rank were ready to receive?

Every one however who is even slightly acquainted with Indian affairs is aware, there have been and are circumstances, in which caste can assume something of the pliability it had in the Vedic period. In Dr. Hunter's most interesting book, *Rural Life in Bengal*, prominence is given to the mingling of the Aryan with the Non-Aryan race in that great Province, of which the religion, the customs, and the very features of the people present full evidence to this day. The same process must have largely gone on among the Dravidian races of the South. As mentioned at page 22 of this Essay, the Non-Aryan tribes, who come into close contact with the Hindoos, have become more or less Hindooized. In some places this Hindooizing work is zealously prosecuted at the present time. These simple people are allowed to follow largely their own religion and customs, and their headmen are flattered by being turned into Rajputs. We have not heard of any being turned into Brahmans. If only the Brahmans be well-paid and honoured, and a few outward rites be observed, the objects of the new teachers are obtained, and their requirements are met.

The success of Christian Missions among the Hill tribes has been very encouraging, and we trust the entire Non-Aryan race will at no distant period come under the influence of the Gospel. Those must take a most perverted view of things, who do not perceive in Christianity a lever for elevating the people, to which Hindooism can make no fair pretension.

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."—EXODUS xx, 8.

"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."—ST. MARK ii, 27.

"If the Sunday had not been observed as a day of rest, but the axe, the spade, the anvil, and the loom had been at work every day, during the last three centuries, I have not the smallest doubt that we should have been at this moment a poorer people and a less civilized people than we are."—LORD MACAULAY.

"The Sabbath, as a political institution, is of inestimable value, independently of its claims to divine authority."—ADAM SMITH. •

"I feel as if God had, by giving the Sabbath, given fifty-two springs in the year."—COLERIDGE.

"Give to the world one half of Sunday, and you will find that religion has no strong hold of the other."—SIR WALTER SCOTT. •

"God's obedient people should use the Sunday holily, and rest from their common and daily business, and also give themselves wholly to heavenly exercises of God's true religion and service. * * God's people hath always, in all ages, without any gainsaying, used to come together upon the Sunday, to celebrate and honour the Lord's blessed name, and carefully to keep that day in holy rest and quietness, both man, woman, child, servant, and stranger."—HOMILY '*Of the Place and Time for Prayer.*'

The Lord's Day, commonly called Sunday.

The Subject of this Essay is the Lord's Day.

In the course of this discussion, we have, so far as possible, kept aloof from the historical and external argument for the Divine origin of Christianity. Our special aim has been to set forth the Divine holiness, wisdom, and goodness, indelibly stamped on the Bible, shining forth gloriously in the character of our Lord Jesus Christ, and presenting a marked contrast to the qualities most conspicuous in human religions. In the institution of the Lord's Day we see such traces of God's tender regard to man, and of His wise and loving provision for man's temporal and spiritual welfare, as are sought for in vain in the institutions of man's appointment. By making the Day of Rest then the subject of our concluding Essay, we are keeping to our chosen line of argument, and are giving additional force to what we have previously advanced.

We have another reason for the choice of this subject. We have a deep conviction that the preservation and extension of the Gospel in the world are inseparably bound up with the right observance of the Lord's Day. If Christianity simply enjoined the observance of certain forms and ceremonies, an hour or two reserved now and then from the calls of business and of pleasure would be sufficient to meet its requirements. If its rites in themselves had unfailing efficacy, mere bodily exercise would satisfy its demands, and secure its benefits. If it were a religion favoured by every tendency of the human mind, and gratifying to its every desire, it would be most easy and pleasant to comply with its instructions. If it were even a system of dogma, appealing only to our reasoning powers,

The Sabbath a fitting subject for our last Essay.

The connexion between Christianity and a weekly Day of Rest.

and not venturing into the mental and moral region, which lies beyond, the attention requisite for its apprehension and reception might without much difficulty be given. A religion with such characteristics might claim little of our time, and would certainly claim nothing from our heart and conscience.

Christianity is not such a religion. We have entered into no formal and detailed statement of its doctrines, but we have had frequent occasion to assert its nature, object, and tendency. We have seen that while eminently adapted to man as a rational and moral creature, so far from being the production of the human mind it soars immeasurably above everything, which man has ever conceived, and amidst the achievements of the race continues to maintain its infinite superiority. We have seen that those to whom the Bible has been entrusted, Jews and Christians, so far from being capable of producing it have failed to rise to its standard, and have continually tried to bring it down to their own level. We have seen that it speaks at once to our understanding, conscience, and heart, and that its end is gained, only when the character is renewed, and the entire life purified and elevated. Is it not evident that a religion like this cannot obtain and retain its power over us, without the constant and vigorous exercise of our faculties, and that stated periods of withdrawal from ordinary avocations must be very helpful, in enabling us to put forth the requisite effort of mind and heart?

The Lord's
Day gives
the need-
ed aid.

Here the Lord's Day comes to us with its gracious and much needed aid. It calls men to leave their ordinary avocations, and helps them in rising above the distractions and cares of life. It gives in innumerable instances most welcome rest from bodily toil. It furnishes most valuable opportunities for studying, alone and with others, the highest subjects, which can possibly engage the mind of man, and for bringing them to bear on the entire character. It presents peculiar facilities for united worship, which, so long as man retains his social nature, must ever have a powerful effect. It eminently tends, when rightly observed, to make man realize his relation to God, to bring him consciously into the Divine presence, and to raise his whole soul towards another and higher state. It presents excellent opportunities for usefulness. Many on the

Sacred Day find both employment and rest in seeking, in various ways, to promote the good of others, and thus they confer and receive signal benefit.

Professing Christians in India are in great danger of disregarding the Day of Rest, and yet it would be difficult to name a country where its observance would be more beneficial. If everywhere, on account of the downward tendencies of our hearts, it is difficult to be a Christian, is it not doubly so in a land like this? How much is there to draw us down, how little to raise us up! After being at first startled and perhaps shocked at the sights and sounds of idolatry and will-worship, how often does the mind settle, if not into satisfaction with the prevailing state of things, at any rate into acquiescence in it, to its own deep injury! While under no temptation to adopt the religious practices of either Hindoos or Muhammadans, and even while looking down on them with contempt, how great is the danger of losing all spiritual sensibility! How worldly, how ungodly is the tone of ordinary society! How alive to the lower, how dull to the higher ends of life! Into what an abyss of inmorality have not a few of our countrymen fallen! How many are in isolated positions, where they can never meet with others for God's worship! When worship is conducted, and we have reason to be thankful it is generally conducted, where there are even small communities, in not a few cases, how cold, uninteresting, and unimpressive are the services held! While in India there is much unfavourable to the spiritual life, there is much in the position of professing Christians to make its presence and power specially desirable, both for their own sake, and for the sake of others. This is a land, where testimony for Christ on the part of those who call themselves His followers would tell with peculiar effect. A better observance of the Day of Rest, because it would raise the tone of Christian feeling, would tend to bring about a happy change.

There is one class of Natives, who ought to take a particular interest in this subject. The many employed in Public Offices are released on Sunday from their ordinary engagements. The boon of the weekly rest is esteemed by them so highly, that its recall would be felt a severe privation, we ought rather to say,

The value of the Lord's Day to Christians in India.

The value of the Day to Natives in Public Offices.

a great calamity. It becomes them to think how it is they have one day in seven for themselves, when no work is imposed on them, which they certainly should not have, if the Government were either Muhammadan or Hindoo. To Christianity their thanks are due, whether or not their indebtedness be discerned. We wish they would consider the higher end for which the day has been appointed, and so use it that this end may be attained. We shall be very thankful if by our presentation of the claims of the Day we impress any of our countrymen, or of the people of this land, with its sacredness and value.

The literature of the Sabbath.

The literature of the Christian Sabbath is very extensive. If all the books and treatises written on the subject were collected, they would form a large library. The best review of this literature, with which we are acquainted, is that given by the Rev. James Gilfillan in his volume on the Sabbath. All we can attempt is to set forth, as distinctly and succinctly as we can, the abiding obligation, and the inestimable privileges of the Day.

The Bible testimony to the Sabbath.

As the Sabbath is a peculiar institution, of which apart from the Bible nothing can be known, we propose to give the greater part of this Essay to the consideration of its teaching on the subject. We shall thus have an opportunity of stating the nature and objects of the day, as asserted in the Book, which enjoins its observance. The views of many professing Christians we deem very inadequate. Not a few consider an attendance on public worship the fulfilment of their Sunday obligation. If we succeed in proving to any of these, on the authority they profess to revere, that much more is demanded from them, and that they are bound to sanctify the Day, we shall confer on them a great benefit. Many who are entirely indifferent to religion, and even scorn it, in their diatribes against Sabbatarians, declare that in maintaining the peculiar sacredness of the first day of the week we are imposing a yoke on ourselves and others, of which the New Testament knows nothing. This notion is widely diffused, and has even made its way to educated Natives, who are thereby led to think we not only wish to make them Christians, but to lay on them services, which Christ has not authorized. Such views we

deem both erroneous and pernicious, and we do not know how we can meet them more effectually than by a careful looking at the teaching of the Scriptures.

Let us consider the original appointment of the Sabbath. The original appointment of the Day. We read, "On the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." Genesis, ii, 2, 3. We cannot suppose the toil and fatigue we know so well affecting the ever blessed God. "He fainteth not, nor is weary." As little can we suppose that with Him one period is more sacred than another. When we read that He rested on the seventh day, and sanctified it, we are at once led to think of man, created in His image, and alone in this world capable of knowing, loving, and serving Him. Even in his state of innocence man was a worker. He was put into the garden of Eden "to dress it and to keep it." This labour, carried beyond certain limits, would tend to painful fatigue, and stated seasons of rest were desirable, if not indispensable. God in His condescension speaks of Himself as entering into rest, when He ceased from His creative work, and He graciously calls on man to imitate His rest, by sanctifying the seventh day.

From this passage in the second chapter of Genesis are we not justified in drawing the inference that one day in seven has been held sacred from the beginning? The glory of God as the Creator was as visible then as it could be afterwards, and the contemplation of this glory was surely worthy of the powers with which man had been endowed. Man was made for God, and everything which increased His knowledge, and impressed him more deeply with the Divine excellence, was fitted to carry him forward to a still higher position than he had first occupied. When it is declared God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, why should we imagine we have a more anticipatory notice of an institution, which was to be set up in subsequent ages, when the reason for the institution was then existing?

A sad change soon passed over man. He still remained a rational and moral creature. He was still bound to love and serve

God. He could still rise to excellence and happiness only by living to God. But he had fallen. He was now set on doing that, which was as injurious to himself, as it was displeasing to God. The necessity for a day of rest and service, reminding him of God's claims, and calling on him to return, was now more urgent than ever. There was a change in his condition, as well as in his character. Labour had passed over into toil, the body as well as the soul had degenerated, and frequent periods for rest were demanded by his altered circumstances.

The weekly division of time.

These views are corroborated by the express mention we find of weeks as divided into seven days—a division of time, which has been found to prevail in successive ages among nations most widely separated from each other. Other explanations of this division of time, and of the sacredness attached to the number seven, have been given, but they are so artificial and far-fetched, so unlikely to suggest themselves to men in general, that we have no hesitation in giving the preference to the supposition that in the second chapter of Genesis we find a narrative, which gives the true explanation of this early and widely spread arrangement. We find many traces of a peculiar sacredness attached to one day above the other days of the week, but the division of time by weeks has been much more prevalent than the attaching of sacredness to a particular day. This is what we might expect. As time advances, and nations change, traditions, even when they can be traced, become more and more broken and imperfect, and are mingled with new and incongruous elements.

The silence of the Biblical narrative.

Against the views now advanced, so far as we are aware, only one argument with a show of plausibility has been brought forward. After the statement found in Genesis, the day 'blessed and sanctified' is not once alluded to down to a period subsequent to the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt. We are asked, If the day were observed, why is it never mentioned? If this argument from silence hold good, we shall arrive at startling conclusions. For instance, not to go beyond the Sabbath itself, we must believe that though the command to remember it was given from Mount Sinai, and had a place assigned it in the sacred tables on which the law

was written by the finger of God, yet from a short period after the promulgation of the law, for about six hundred years, no obedience was rendered to the command, as it is not once named in the sacred narrative from the period immediately succeeding the time when the law was given, till we come to the days of Elisha, when there is a passing allusion to it. 2 Kings, ii, 23. During all the years spent in the wilderness, with Moses himself as their chief—during the period, when under the leading of Joshua they took possession of the promised land—during the long time spent under the Judges down far into the era of the Kings, the fourth command was not obeyed by the children of Israel—if this argument from silence be so strong, as to forbid our belief in a Sabbath from the beginning! The argument has indeed no weight in either the one case or the other. The silence may result from the peculiar nature of the narrative, from its brevity or its special design; but explain it as we may, the fact is sure, that institutions have been upheld, and events have transpired, of which no record has come down to us. Every one who has studied either profane or sacred history may be aware what a broken reed in many a case the argument from silence is.

We now come to the incident mentioned in Exodus xvi chapter. At the fourth verse we read that God told Moses he would "rain bread" from heaven, and that on the sixth day the people would gather a double supply. The promise of this double supply does not seem to have been communicated to the people, when the event occurred, which is mentioned in the 22nd verse. The people apparently of their own accord gathered a double quantity of manna. The rulers in seeming perplexity come to inform Moses, and to ask him what ought to be done. He tells them that all had been done rightly, for to-morrow was the rest of the holy Sabbath. The narrative gives us the impression, that the people previously knew about the Sabbath, and had a reverence for it, but were imperfectly instructed regarding it. Amidst the corruption and bondage of Egypt the worship of God had no doubt been much neglected, though never wholly abandoned, and the conduct of the people, in reference to the Sabbath, as mentioned in this chapter, is what might have been expected from persons, who had some

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the Day.

acquaintance with the institution, but had failed to uphold it in its integrity.

The place given to the Sabbath in the decalogue deserves our particular attention.

The decalogue—Is it the moral law?

The question has been long and eagerly discussed, and it does not look, as if the discussion were to cease, Is the decalogue the mere summary of the law given to the Jews, and binding on other nations, only so far as men learn from other sources, that its commands are accordant with God's will? Or is it the summary of the moral law, which all, as intelligent and responsible creatures, are bound to obey? We think good reason may be advanced for holding the latter representation as the right answer to the question.

When we look at the decalogue, what do we find? Let us for a little keep the fourth commandment out of our view. We find no minute social, political, and ceremonial regulations. We feel ourselves within the sphere of those commands and prohibitions, to which the human conscience, when enlightened, is ever ready to respond. The first portion is devoted to the duties we owe to God, and the latter to those we owe to our fellow-creatures and ourselves. Idolatry, blasphemy, murder, adultery, theft, false witness, and covetousness are the sins condemned. Are not these everywhere and always great offences? The acknowledgment of God, as our God, and reverence to parents are the duties expressly enjoined. Are not these everywhere and always incumbent duties? The decalogue has thus a breadth, a comprehensiveness, and in the case of the tenth commandment a heart searching power, which separates it widely from the numerous regulations about offerings, sacrifices, sacred places, sacred times, and ordinary social and political life, given through Moses to the children of Israel. As the difference between the decalogue and those regulations is manifest, are we not justified in drawing the inference, that the former contains in a summarized form the moral law, and is binding on mankind, while the latter regulations were laid on only one nation for a limited time, and a special purpose?

To this view various objections have been advanced. We are reminded, for instance, that the decalogue is preceded by

the words, "I am the Lord thy God, who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage," and that long life in the land of Canaan is the promise attached to the fifth commandment. This reference to the children of Israel, to whom the decalogue was first given, does not in the least degree lessen its adaptation for the guidance of mankind. Such a reference is in entire accord with the mode God has in His wisdom and love adopted for the communication of His will. The instruction of the Bible is never indefinite and general. It is to a remarkable degree particularised and localised. It thus comes to us invested with an interest and charm it could not otherwise have. As Christians, we go constantly to the New Testament, to know our Lord's will, but if we look there for addresses to the Church in all ages, we shall look in vain. We have an account of the miracles, which Christ wrought among the Jews, of the words He spoke to them, and the life He led before them. We have the letters of His Apostles addressed to the Churches they planted, and every word is as applicable to them, as if their benefit alone had been regarded. Are we on that account shut out from the instruction the New Testament contains? Quite the reverse. The application of the Gospel to the heart and life of the primitive Christians makes it at once more intelligible and impressive to us. Thus it is with the Old as with the New Testament. Thus it is with the decalogue.

Again we are told, 'these commands refer only to the surface of the character, they simply require abstinence from certain outward offences, and the performance of certain outward duties, and no ulterior meaning can be reached, except by a spiritualising process of interpretation, which thrusts into the words a meaning they do not contain.' Because the decalogue gives so much prominence to the outward life, why should we infer it has nothing to do with the inner man? In laws for obvious reasons so concisely and vigorously expressed, and addressed to a whole nation, it was fit that the stress should be laid on the outward life, which is the revelation of the character. Our Lord taught that God was a spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth—that God looks at the heart, not the outward appearance, but He also taught that,

we are to try men by their deeds. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." "Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it." The tree is known not by its root, its leaves, or its blossoms, but by its fruit. When we take the decalogue along with the teaching of the Mosaic dispensation, which required the people to circumcise their hearts, and to love God with all their might, we cannot doubt that pious thoughtful Israelites saw far beyond the letter of its injunctions and prohibitions. Divinely instructed souls were led towards the interpretation, which our Lord gave with noon-day clearness. The tenth commandment, we must remember, regards the heart exclusively, and we cannot suppose that Saul of Tarsus was the only Jew, who was led by it to see the spirituality of the entire law.

Another objection advanced against receiving the decalogue as the moral law rests on the sanctions, with which it was guarded. To this we reply that these sanctions are not mentioned in the decalogue itself, and have no necessary connexion with it. The ten commandments were ordained by God to be, as it were, the very heart of the peculiar religious and political government He had set up among His people, and the severest punishment was denounced against the violation of them, on the ground of such violation being rebellion against the state, as well as against the Most High.

These and similar objections to accepting the decalogue as the moral law utterly fail, in our judgment, to overthrow the claim its own breadth and excellence present for assigning it this high position.

This view of the decalogue is confirmed by the prominence given to it, and the honour conferred on it. It was written by God on two tables of stone. These tables were put in the most sacred place, in the national sanctuary—in the ark of the covenant, under the Cherubim, in the Most Holy Place, first in the tabernacle, and afterwards in the temple. Can we suppose, that laws so highly honoured did not differ essentially from regulations, which, though inscribed in the national code, and binding on the people, bore the evident impress of their local and temporary obligation, and were significantly put in a lower place?

With these views of the decalogue we think ourselves justified in maintaining that the fourth commandment is of permanent and universal obligation. When we look at the command itself we see additional reason for arriving at this conclusion.

The
Fourth
Com-
mand-
ment.

We read, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." The first word suggests that this was the re-affirmation of a command previously given. The word 'remember,' as used in the Pentateuch continually refers to something which had previously occurred, and was well known by those who are addressed. "Remember thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt." "Remember what the Lord did to Pharaoh." "Remember what the Lord did to Miriam." "Remember what Amalek did to thee." "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations."

'Remem-
ber.'

The Israelites were required by this command to abstain from ordinary labour, and to secure rest for their dependents and cattle. * The reason assigned is that "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it." The words carry us back to the second chapter of Genesis. There is only a slight expansion of what we read there. There is no allusion to the peculiar position of the children of Israel. The reason stated was applicable to men from the beginning, and will be to the end of time.

Rest,

We have no space for adducing all the passages in the Old Testament, which refer to the Sabbath, but we can be helped in understanding the law, by gathering these passages into classes, and furnishing specimens of each. In the prosecution of this object we observe:—

1st.—There is a marked absence of minute instruction regarding the way, in which the Sabbath should be spent. At Exodus, xvi, 29 we read, "Abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day." The connexion shows that the act here prohibited is going forth to gather manna on the Sabbath, and has no reference to going out of one's house on that day. At Exodus, xxxv, 3, the kindling of fire is prohibited. The prohibition is explained by Ch. xvi, 23, where the people are commanded not only to

The Sab-
bath in
the Old
Testa-
ment.

gather, but to bake the supply of manna for two days. These two prohibitions seem to have been incumbent on the children of Israel only while sojourning in the wilderness. When we consider the climate of Canaan, and remember that in all ages God has required mercy and not sacrifice, we cannot conceive the chosen people were forbidden to kindle fire in circumstances indispensable to health and comfort, and often even to life. With these exceptions, which had a merely local and temporary application, we find not a word, in the way either of injunction or prohibition, as to the outward observance of the Day.

2nd.—While minute details are not given, the Sabbath is singled out in the sacred record for frequent and honoured mention. A glance at the words 'Sabbath' and 'Sabbaths' in a Bible Concordance is sufficient to show the truth of this remark. "Ye shall fear every man his mother and his father, and keep my Sabbaths; I am the Lord your God." "Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord." On the Sabbath the offerings at the temple were doubled.

3rd.—The Sabbath was appointed 'a sign' between God and the children of Israel throughout their generations—a token of His peculiar relation to them, and regard for them, Exodus, xxxi, 13. The institution was thus raised above temple, sacrifice, priesthood, festival, and ritual. When we remember the children of Israel were "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation," separated from the other nations of the earth for God's special service, we may be sure the institution had a peculiar moral significance, which was chosen a sign of the covenant, into which He had entered with them. The bow in the cloud had been seen for ages before it was appointed the sign of the covenant made with Noah, from which it received new significance. In like manner the Sabbath had existed long before the Mosaic dispensation, but with the coming in of that dispensation it was raised to a higher place than ever.

4th.—The observance of the Sabbath is represented as indicative of devotedness to God, peculiarly pleasing to Him, and rewarded with a signal blessing. Isaiah, lvi, 2, 4; lviii, 13, 14. In the ideal temple described by Ezekiel, in entire accordance

with the tenor of the Old Testament, the priests are represented as keeping God's laws and statutes, and hallowing His Sabbaths. Ch. xlv, 24.

5th.—The violation of the Sabbath is represented as a heinous offence, bringing down God's wrath on individuals and communities, and its withdrawal is represented as one of the heaviest of judgments. The Sabbath breaker was to be put to death, Exodus, xxxi, 14; Numbers, xv, 32—36. The violation of the sacred day brought down on the people the wrath of heaven. "My Sabbaths they greatly polluted: then I said, I would pour out my fury on them in the wilderness, to consume them." Ezekiel, xx, 13. Nehemiah in his prayer, Ch. ix, 14, mentions the Sabbath as one of the great privileges of his people, and names the violation of it along with the breaking of God's precepts, statutes, and laws, as the procuring cause of the fearful calamities, which had overtaken and well-nigh crushed them as a nation. Many had been their offences against God, in reference to the temple, the priesthood, the sacrifices, and the tithes, but the violation of the Sabbath rose up before the mind of Nehemiah, as an offence of peculiar heinousness, which deserved the severest punishment. His profound reverence for the day was shown by his conduct, Ch. xiii, 15—23. One of the threatenings addressed to the people was, that God would make their Sabbaths to cease, Hosea, ii, 11, and when they were sent into captivity the land would enjoy the rest, of which it had been robbed by their wickedness. Leviticus xxvi, 34. God caused the solemn feasts and Sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion. The adversaries saw her in her desolation, and mocked at her Sabbaths. Lamentations, i, 7; ii, 6.

These passages throw much light on the nature and claims of the Sabbatical institution, as set up among God's ancient people.

From these passages we are surely entitled to draw the inference that the Sabbath was on an entirely different footing from the 'meats and drinks and divers washings and carnal ordinances' of the Mosaic dispensation. It is inconceivable that an institution of a merely ritual or typical character should obtain a prominence and honour denied to all other institutions

of the same class. If it did not rise above the level of the Mosaic enactments, why is it throughout the Old Testament invested with peculiar sacredness?

When we ponder the passages we have quoted we may learn the objects, for which the day was appointed, and the reasons for attaching to it such high importance.

Objects of
the Sab-
batic ap-
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ment Bo-
dily rest.

Periodical relief from bodily toil was evidently intended to be one of the great benefits secured. Nothing can be more explicit than the inculcation of this rest in which animals as well as men were to share. This was surely an inestimable boon. In Canaan, as in other lands, man's wants were supplied by constant toil. In the sweat of his face he ate bread. In this arrangement of Providence, God's loving kindness to man as His creature is far more visible than His displeasure at man as a sinner. But speedy exhaustion is the result of unremitting toil. Every day nature insists on hours of entire repose, and calls to it by drawing around us the curtains of the night. Something more however than daily rest is needed. In all ages and among all nations there have been seasons of relaxation from labour, recurring with more or less frequency and regularity. It is of great importance they should not occur too frequently, for then sufficient opportunity will not be afforded for performing the work man's condition, as a dweller on earth, demands. They should not occur too seldom, or the requisite rest will not be obtained. They should not occur irregularly, and extend when they come over a lengthened period, for in that case work will be felt too irksome and exhausting at one time, and at another time industrial habits will be seriously impaired. Who but God, who knows thoroughly man's frame and circumstances, could so fix the period of rest, as to secure most effectually man's welfare and enjoyment?

Here we see the reason for God Himself making the apportionment of time, which we find in the fourth commandment. Six days of labour are to be followed by a day of rest. Has not experience proved that on this apportionment God has in a remarkable manner stamped His knowledge, wisdom, and love? Would not a fourth or a fifth day, as a rule, come too often, and a tenth or a twelfth too seldom, for release from work?

We all know what became of the decade, which the French revolutionists at the end of the last century appointed in their destructive zeal.

During a great part of the history of the chosen people, life was, we may well suppose, more simple and less hurried than it is with very many in our day, but we may be sure that to multitudes one day of entire rest in the week was a priceless boon. An arrest was laid on the demands of selfishness and avarice, and the toiling and the weary found themselves resting under the shadow of this most merciful institution. There were persons to whom the institution was unwelcome. Hard worldly men chafed under the restraint imposed on their pursuits by the Sabbath, and would have gladly abolished it, if they could. The prophet Amos represents them as saying, "When will the Sabbath be gone, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great; and falsifying the balances by deceit?" Ch. viii, 5.

While all are agreed that the Jewish Sabbath required abstinence from work, there is a great difference of opinion regarding the keeping of the day. Many have strenuously maintained, that retirement from ordinary labour is alone enjoined by the fourth commandment. One writer says, "The Sabbath was originally nothing more than a day of physical rest." On the other hand it has been maintained, that while the letter of the fourth commandment required only abstinence from work, its spirit required the consecration of the day to God's worship, and withdrawal from everything which interfered with that consecration. With this latter opinion we agree for the reasons we proceed to state.

1st.—There is no virtue in mere abstinence from bodily labour. Such rest is often a great boon, but it involves no moral goodness. If the Sabbatical rest meant nothing more than this, we can see no reason for the peculiar sacredness attached to it. In that case the rest enjoyed by the children of Israel was no higher than that enjoyed by their cattle. Spiritual rest.

2nd.—The rest of one day, after six days of work, is based on God's entering into His rest, on the completion of the work of creation. Man, made in God's image, is called to enter into the rest of his God. We would say with all reverence,

the rest of God is not cessation from action. He rejoices in the work of His hands, and is not man bound, when enjoying the rest God has given him, to contemplate God's works with reverence, love, and gratitude? God ceased from His creative work to enter on His upholding and governing work. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," our Saviour said, when speaking about the Sabbath rest. The children of Israel, by making it a day of mere relaxation from labour, would have shown how unworthy they were of being reckoned the children of the Most High. His rest was not inactivity, and neither should theirs be. In their measure, according to their capacity, they were bound to follow Him in holy activity, and the weekly rest gave them peculiar facilities for carrying out their vocation, as His ministering people. We cannot doubt that devout and thoughtful Jews saw in the Sabbath something far beyond an arrangement for bodily rest. Some of their most esteemed teachers have testified to its spiritual aim. Abenezra says, "The Sabbath was given to man, that he might consider the works of God, and meditate in His law." Abarbanel speaks to the same effect. "The seventh day has been sequestered for learning the Divine law, and for remembering well the explanations and inquiries regarding it. As is taught in Gemara Hierosol, 'Sabbaths and holidays were only appointed for meditating on the law of God; and therefore it is said, in Medrash Schamoth Rabba, that the Sabbath is to be prized as the whole law.'" Another leading authority, R. Menasse Ben Isr., even characterizes it as "a notable error to imagine the Sabbath to have been instituted for idleness; for as idleness is the mother of all vice, it would then have been the occasion of more evil than good." *

3rd.—At Deuteronomy v, 15, we read, "Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day." Nehemiah asserts the connexion between the Sabbath and deliverance from Egypt. Ch. ix, 11—15. In the Old Testament a very prominent place is

* Quoted in Dr. Fairbairn's Typology; Vol. II.—p. 140.

given to this great event. The feast of the passover was appointed to keep it in perpetual and vivid remembrance. The sacred writers continually refer to it, to excite the love and gratitude of their brethren towards their covenant God. When we remember how gloriously God appeared for Israel in their redemption from Egypt, and how He then formed them into a nation, preparing them for all His subsequent proceedings towards them, we see full reason why the event should be kept so constantly before their minds. From the words of Moses, which we have quoted, we learn that the children of Israel were required, on the Sabbath, to contemplate God in the various aspects, in which He had revealed Himself to them,—not only as the Creator, but as their covenant God, as their Governor and Redeemer. Where God was not thus adored on the day of Rest, not only was a great privilege forborne, but a great duty was neglected, and consequently a great sin was committed.

4th.—The children of Israel were a kingdom of priests, and as such were called to discharge high functions. They were a people 'holy to the Lord.' Surely careful preparation for their work was necessary, and when we read of the Sabbath as a sign between God and them, as 'holy-to the Lord,' may we not infer that the Day was specially set apart for this purpose? If mere abstinence from work, or in other words, mere idleness was all which the institution required, it must have unfitted them for their work, instead of qualifying them for it.

5th.—The entire tenor of the Old Testament requires us to regard the Sabbath rest as something far beyond the mere cessation of every day work. If this be all which is meant by the terms which the Sacred Writers employ regarding the Day, the duty of sanctifying it, the sin of desecrating it, the favour of God which its right observance secures, the wrath which its violation incurs, are not their words at once inflated and misleading? We have been even told that in Isaiah lviii, 13, 14, there is no reference to the spiritual keeping of the Sabbath! "Their 'own ways,' which the people were forbidden to follow on the Sabbath, were the common secular labours of the week." Their 'own pleasure' was simply

their 'own business.' Their 'own words' were those which referred to their 'ordinary trade.' Let only their every day work be put aside, let them only cease from speaking or thinking about it, and they have done all which God's law requires. They may recreate and amuse themselves to their heart's content, provided of course they do nothing morally wrong, they may engage in no special act of worship, they may spend the day exactly as they spend other days, with the exception named, and they will have done every thing requisite to secure the Divine approbation. By mere abstinence from work they will call the Sabbath 'a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable,' they will 'delight themselves in the Lord,' and He will reward such observance with the most signal tokens of His favour!—What are we to say to such interpretation? If this be not the expulsion from a passage of its obvious sense, we know not what is. Let the glowing words of the Prophet regarding the coming triumph of the Messiah's kingdom be interpreted in the same fashion, and the prospect which has for ages been cheering the hearts of the faithful will speedily lose its brightness. As the surrounding air rushes in, and fills up the place, from which it has been with difficulty expelled, so the meaning of the passage in Isaiah we have been considering and of similar passages speedily reappears, when we cease to hear the gloss put upon them, and will be felt in the future, as in the past, by those who fear God, a powerful stimulus and a great encouragement to the spiritual observance of the Day of Rest.

6th.—These considerations lead us up to the great reason, we apprehend, for the peculiar sacredness attached to the Sabbath in the Old Testament. With man's deteriorated character, exposed as he is on every side to trial and temptation, assailed as he is from within and from without, often distracted by the business and pressed by the cares of life, he needs seasons for the refreshing and invigorating of his spirit, far more than he does for the resting of his body. God knows what we need, and He has graciously made provision for our wants. The institution which secured rest from bodily toil, by its calling the Israelites away from their ordinary avocations, and by laying its arrest so far as possible on the acti-

vities of life, furnished them with special facilities for holding communion with God, and for engaging in His worship. They were commanded to love God with all their heart, and soul, and might, to circumcise their hearts, to remember all the way by which God haddled them, and to conduct themselves as a holy people. Did not this spiritual work require leisure, and deliberate prolonged thought? Can we suppose that in enjoining a weekly day of rest God had no regard to the facilities it gave His people for discharging the high duties incumbent on them, and for attaining the character they ought to possess? Must we not rather suppose that in the appointment of the Day God had a special view to the spiritual purposes it was fitted to subserve?

For ourselves we cannot conceive that a day for mere cessation from work should be raised above temple, sacrifice, and ritual, as the Sabbath unquestionably is. The Old Testament is as free from superstition as the New. No one day is in itself more sacred with God than another. If one day acquire a special sacredness it must be from the object, to which it is consecrated. God's worship is man's first duty, his highest honour, greatest privilege, and chief joy. When thus employed man rests in God, obtains true satisfaction, and rises to all the excellence, of which he is capable. This worship of God reflects sacredness, and we would say greatness too, on everything with which it is connected. If one day in the week be specially devoted to this spiritual work, and man's character and position while on earth demand the arrangement, that day, though essentially the same with the other days, from its associations becomes invested with a dignity which does not attach to them. This thought gives us an insight into the tenor of the Old Testament regarding the Sabbath. The day is so sacred because its occupations are so spiritual. If the Day had been appointed only for bodily rest, the teaching of the Old Testament on this subject would have been to us an inexplicable enigma.

The Day is honoured because its occupations are spiritual.

Objections have been advanced to the views we have been advocating.

We are told that 'holy' means separate from common use, as the temple and its vessels were, and that therefore the com-

Objections to

the spiri- mand to keep the Sabbath holy simply means that by the
tual obli- cessation of work it should be separated from other days.
gation of Does not 'holy' mean separate for sacred use, as well as
the Day, separate from common use? The Israelites were 'holy to the
Lord,' and if they did not love, serve, and worship Him, they
failed to fulfil the end of their calling. It is expressly said
the Sabbath was to be 'holy to the Lord,' and if not sacred to
His worship, we do not see how it could be holy to Him.

Again, we are told that the words of the fourth commandment require only abstinence from work. If we are to take the mere words of the commandments, and pay no regard to their spirit, their requirements will be narrow indeed. Mere abstinence from open idolatry is all the second commandment, in that case, requires. The third is obeyed by abstinence from impious talk. The fifth is obeyed by outward homage to parents. The sixth is obeyed by not committing murder, however murderous one's thoughts, and even purposes have been. The seventh is obeyed, when adultery is not committed, though the heart may have reeked with impurity. We need not proceed farther. Such a mode of interpretation confutes itself. Commands so impressively given, and so sacredly preserved, were surely intended to enjoin something far beyond bare obedience to the letter. Even the Pentateuch makes it evident heartfelt and spiritual obedience was required. The duties incumbent on the people were suggested by the sins forbidden.

Again, we are told that the magistrate could take cognizance only of open violations of the Sabbath. So it was, and so it must ever be, where the magistrate is a human being. The magistrate among the Jews could no more punish a man for murder, adultery, or any other offence, except the sin were consummated, than a magistrate can in our days. A man might be utterly estranged from the God of Israel, while rendering punctilious obedience to the Mosaic ritual, and the magistrate could not touch him. Does it follow that the magistrate's cognizance covered the extent of the Divine requirements? Certainly not. God commands much more than man can exact, and will punish sins, which never came within the ken of earthly rulers. Neither King nor Priest could condemn the people as violators of the Sabbath, when the lette

of the law was obeyed, but they could instruct the people, and we have no doubt the more spiritual of them did, that they were guilty in the sight of God, however innocent in the eyes of man, when they did not devote the Day to His worship.

Once more we are told, that the Sabbath breaker was to be put to death, and we are asked, if we think the violation of the Sabbath should be now capitally punished? We unhesitatingly answer, No. The perverse disobedient son, the idolater, and the adulterer were liable to death, as well as the Sabbath breaker, but we are not now authorized to punish offenders in this manner. We do not therefore conclude that idolatry, perverse filial disobedience and adultery have ceased to be sins. In the ten commandments we find no mention of these sanctions, but when they were brought into the national code of the Israelites, for reasons in some degree apparent to those who have studied the peculiarities of the Mosaic dispensation, they were guarded by heavy penalties. The earthly penalties have ceased, but the laws remain.

In the review of this discussion, we think ourselves justified in arriving at the conclusion, that the consecration of the Sabbath to God's worship is enjoined by the fourth commandment, and that the law was violated in spirit and thought, not in letter, when the Day was not spent in holy service. Inference,

As to the way in which the Sabbath was actually spent, from the time of its re-appointment at Mount Sinai till the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, we have no reliable information. As the Day itself, though certainly observed except during the periods of national apostacy, is not once mentioned during a very long period, and is then only incidentally referred to, it would be strange indeed if we were told how it was kept. We know that after the captivity in Babylon, the Jews, throughout their own land and in the countries of their dispersion, established synagogues, where they met on the Sabbath for the reading of the Scriptures, prayer, worship, and mutual instruction. Before the Christian era the services of the synagogue were as firmly established as the services of the temple itself. Because we have no information about united worship, except that of the temple, during the earlier period, the inference has been drawn there had been on the The way in which the Jews spent the Day.

Sabbath no gathering for prayer and instruction. We can see nothing to justify this inference. As no information is before us, we are left to probabilities, and to us all the circumstances of the case seem to favour the supposition, that united worship was held. The people were commanded to speak continually to their children of the ways and claims of God, and we cannot suppose they allowed the Day of Rest to pass away without giving special prominence to such instruction. The Priests and Levites were scattered as religious guides among the people for the very purpose of teaching them statutes and judgments. Is it conceivable that they did not try to gather the people together in smaller or larger numbers on the day, when they could so easily meet, so as to give their instruction the wider extension, and the greater effect? Is it not implied in the very incidental notice of the Sabbath in 2nd Kings iv, 23, that it was the habit of the people to go even from some distance to receive instruction from the Prophet on the Sacred Day? Was not social worship as much fitted and needed then as now, to promote the interest of living piety? As only those resident in Jerusalem and neighbourhood could join the worship of the temple, except on the occasion of the great festivals, if throughout the land no meeting for worship was held on Sabbath, we cannot but think the Day was allowed to run sadly to waste. In the absence of information probability confronts probability, and to our minds the probability has great force, that wherever the people were in any degree faithful to the Mosaic dispensation, public worship was maintained.

The Sabbath of the Old Testament and the Sabbath of the Rabbis, The Sabbath of the Old Testament has been often confounded with the Sabbath of the Jews, as prescribed by the Rabbis, and observed by the people. This great mistake has led to much misapprehension. The Sabbath appointed by God is to a remarkable degree different from, and even opposed to, the Sabbath of the Talmud. In the Old Testament, as we have observed, no minute instructions are laid down. The sacred observance of the Day is insisted on, as no mere external service ever is, the violation of the Day is condemned, as no transgression of the ceremonial law ever is, but such details as we have regarding the tabernacle, its furniture, its fittings,

the priests, their dresses, offerings, and services are altogether wanting. With the very slight exception of the prohibition to light fire and to go out on the Sabbath, to which we have already referred, nothing is either enjoined or forbidden, as if God would train His people even under the former dispensation for service prompted by loving and grateful hearts, untrammelled by minute instructions. The self-righteous formal spirit of the Jews would not allow the Sabbath to remain as God had appointed it. We meet with a new proof that, so far from being capable of setting up the Mosaic dispensation, they were unable to keep up to its level. With a professed view to the honouring of the Sabbath the Rabbis, no doubt in accordance with the temper of the people, imposed regulations so numerous trivial and puerile, that spiritual worship must have been crushed under them. We give a few from the Treatise Sabbath of the Mishna. "If the master puts out his hand into the street and puts a gift into the beggar's hand, or takes the beggar's wallet and draws it back into the house, the master has broken the Sabbath; if the beggar puts his hand into the house, and puts his wallet into the master's hand, or takes something out of it, he is guilty; but if the master puts his hand out, and the beggar takes the gift (or puts his wallet in the other's hand,) or the beggar puts his hand in, and the master puts the gift into it, neither has broken the Sabbath (because in these cases, the action is not complete.)" "Into a pot or kettle, which has been moved from the fire boiling, a man must not put spice; but he may do so in a dish or on a plate." "If a man carries a loaf into the public reshuth (place,) he is guilty; if two carry it they are absolved (namely, because in the one case a man does a complete work, but in the other not.)" * Is *this* the Sabbath of the Old Testament? Why should two things be confounded, which are essentially different?

Much has been said about the Jewish Sabbath, as a gloomy burdensome institution, under which the people had groaned, and to which amidst the light and liberty of the Christian dis-

Mistaken
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the Jew-
ish Sab-
bath.

* A number of similar regulations are quoted by Mr. Conder in his Commentary on Matthew, and by Dr. Fairbairn in his Typology.

pensation we ought never to submit. We cannot discover the gloom, with which the Day has been charged. Is rest from toil a gloomy thing? Did the children of toil among the Jews feel themselves entering a dark cloud, as the shadow of the Sabbath came over them? Were they glad, when it was gone? Was the contemplation of the Most High, as the Creator and Governor of the world, and as the God and Redeemer of Israel, a gloomy employment? Was the worship of God, untrammelled by trivial and vexatious regulations, a wearisome exercise? Were the various services to their fellow-creatures, as well as to God, to which the feelings suggested by the Day were well fitted to prompt them, an irksome task? Instead of gloom and burdensomeness, we find liberty and joy imparted by the Giver of all good.

Summary
of the
views ad-
vanced.

Before proceeding further it may be well to present in a summarized form the positions we have been endeavouring to establish. The Sabbath was appointed at the time of man's creation, marriage and the Sabbath being the only institutions which have come to us from the garden of Eden. The reason given for the setting apart of the day is one which holds good for human beings in all ages, and the benefits such a season confers are more or less needed in every state of society. The decalogue was the republication of the moral law, and is binding on the whole of the human family. The law of the Sabbath found in it, with its re-affirmation of the primitive reason for the institution, has no mere national or temporary significance. The law mercifully provides for both bodily and spiritual rest. The great sacredness attached to the Day in the Old Testament, in the way of precept, promise, and threatening, proves its entire separation from, and vast superiority to all mere ritual observances.

We think the facts of the case fully sustain these positions. We have dwelt the longer and more earnestly on this part of our subject, because in these facts we find an immovable basis for the perpetual obligation of the Day of Rest. They bring us to the conclusion that as the Sabbath began with man's creation, it will end with the consummation of all things. The reasons for its continuance, instead of becoming feeble by time, have received new force, as the history of the world has

advanced. If it has been put aside, the authority for the change must be as clearly pronounced, as that for the original institution. Instead of being called to prove the authority for its continuance, we are entitled to ask the authority for its cessation.

While maintaining that properly speaking the Sabbath was no institution of Judaism, to be put aside with everything else exclusively belonging to the Mosaic dispensation, we acknowledge it received a Jewish tinge from the circumstances in which it was long observed. It was a regulating element throughout their religious year. Their yearly festivals were so arranged as to mark its special sacredness. It had the most prominent place in their various celebrations. It had also no doubt a typical reference to the rest, into which Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, would lead His people under the New Dispensation, which He would establish. With Judaism the Jewish element in the Sabbath would cease, but this element was only incidental, and when removed leaves the main characteristics of the Day untouched.

The conduct and words of our Saviour in reference to the Sabbath deserve our special attention. Our Lord gave great umbrage to the Jews by the manner in which He acted on the Sacred Day. He healed the sick, and the disciples when walking through the fields plucked the ears of corn. He was consequently charged with the violation of the Sabbath. In vindication of His conduct He appealed to the Scriptures, which they professed to revere. He cites an Old Testament principle, "God requires mercy and not sacrifice." He cites Old Testament instances. He proves by the case of David and of the Priests in the temple, that God has regard to the spirit, not the mere letter, of His commands, and that the work forbidden in the fourth commandment was not all work, but the daily usual labour, which is inconsistent with its object. Work may devolve on us on that day, which it would be a sin to leave undone. Our Lord shows the inconsistency of His accusers by the way in which they themselves acted, where their cattle were concerned. He ends His defence by declaring His authority, "The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath."

The Jewish element in the Sabbath.

Our Lord's conduct in reference to the Sabbath.

Unwar-
rantable
inference.

From our Lord's conduct and words many have drawn the inference, that the Sabbath commanded in the decalogue ended with the ushering in of His Dispensation. This inference seems to us unwarrantable. He was a member of the Jewish commonwealth, and faithfully observed its rules. Of Him it might be affirmed in a very special manner, that He fulfilled all righteousness by walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. Is it conceivable then, that He either violated the Sabbath, or even put a slight on it? He did break through the limitations, with which the Day had been fenced by the Jews, and paid no regard to the regulations they had imposed, but, as His defence shows, He acted in entire accordance with its purport and spirit. He rescued the command to keep the Day holy, as He did the other commands of God, from the false glosses, which hid their meaning, and perverted their object. He said, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." It was made for man's benefit, to promote at once his temporal and spiritual welfare. A similar remark might be made about Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and every institution, which God has ordained for man, while he is on earth. Institutions become mere idols when they are turned into masters to be slavishly obeyed, instead of being regarded as means appointed to subserve man's welfare. The Jews by their innumerable and trivial rules had acted as if man were made for the Sabbath, and as if life might be well spent in paying it fantastic honour. In reference to the Sabbath and other institutions, professing Christians have not infrequently followed the example of the Jews, and when they have done so, the consideration of our Lord's words has been well fitted to recal them to a sense of their error. The principle which our Lord adduces from the Old Testament, "the Lord requires mercy, and not sacrifice," applies not only to the Sabbath, but to all outward ordinances of every kind. It may be made a pretext for sinful laxity, but when the principle is carried out under the guidance of an enlightened mind, a tender conscience, and a loving heart, we cannot doubt that God's approbation is secured, even when there is a marked deviation from outward rule. We find an illustration in 2nd Chronicles xxx, 18, 19,

If in our probationary state each must have a discretionary power, for which we are directly responsible to God, how much more must it reside in Him, who is the Lord of all, and therefore the Lord of the Sabbath! He alone can judge perfectly of the way in which it ought to be kept, and He watches over its observance with supreme authority. If the original institution required only bodily rest, and were of temporary obligation, we could not expect our Saviour to call Himself its Lord. So external an ordinance, at the very time of its death, deserved not so high an honour. He is the Lord of the living, not of the dead or dying. On the title, "the Lord of the Sabbath," Dr. David King well remarks, "It seems as if some cannot think of power in connexion with the Sabbath unless as exercised in abrogation. If it be placed in Christ's charge they take for granted that more or less extinction must be the consequence. They speak as if Christ's sceptre was an axe, and the only question were how much it would hew down and devastate! We maintain on the contrary that Christ would not be the Lord of the Sabbath to be its destroyer. In the language of the New Testament this title points to assured prosperity. But though he will not superintend in order to annihilate either worship or worshippers, the designation "Lord" does suppose a *manifested* supremacy, and leads us to expect ameliorating modification with essential preservation—in other words a Christian Sabbath or Lord's Day."

"The Lord of the Sabbath."

There has been much discussion about the words "The Sabbath was made for man," some maintaining that the words mean the Sabbath was made for the worshipper, not the worshipper for the Sabbath, while others contend that it means the Sabbath was made for man—the man, as the exact expression is—for the human race, not for one section of it, as the Jewish nation was. In support of this latter view it is alleged 'the man' must mean either a particular person, or man in general, and as no individual can be referred to, it must refer to the race. This view has much to recommend it, but as the immediate reference of our Lord's words is to the worshipper, we do not think the reference to the race can be proved. One thing is certain, that our Lord in the most explicit terms predicted the destruction of the temple, the overthrow of the

"The Sabbath was made for man."

Jewish Church and state, the cessation of the peculiar services of Judaism, and the introduction of a new and spiritual dispensation, but He did not utter one word about the abrogation of the Sabbath.

Apostolic
teaching.

Let us now consider the teaching of the Apostolic writings regarding the Sabbath.

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ment.

The question has not infrequently been settled in this summary fashion. 'The Jews were commanded to rest on the seventh day in terms so explicit, that no one could misunderstand or pervert them. Point out to us a passage in the New Testament of equal explicitness, commanding us to rest from all work on the first day, and we shall be satisfied. If you cannot, we may see good reason for abstaining from our ordinary work, and for meeting with others for God's worship on that day, but we cannot regard it as a Divine institution binding on our consciences.' This demand for direct legislation seems to us unreasonable. It can be made only when some of the most important principles and marked features of the New Testament are overlooked.

Considera-
tions in
reply.

1st.—Little
direct le-
gislation
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Various considerations explain the absence of direct enactment in consistency with the view the Sabbath has not ceased. 1st.—The New Testament from beginning to end has remarkably little in the way of direct legislation on any subject. There indeed great facts are proclaimed, great principles are asserted, great truths are taught, great lessons for the guidance of life are imparted, but there is no trace of minute legislation. Baptism and the Lord's Supper were instituted by our Lord Himself in remarkably few and informal words. Regarding these ordinances many questions have been eagerly discussed, which could never have arisen, if the minute and precise manner of the Old Testament had been followed. On the subject of Church Government not a syllable is found in the shape of direct enactment. We have principles laid down, and precedents recorded, which are sufficient for our guidance, but the statements made are so fragmentary, indirect, and we may say incidental, that the most conscientious and enlightened Christians have differed widely as to the inferences to be drawn from them. One inference seems to us manifest—that God's grace is not shut up within the limit of any ecclesiasti-

cal organization, and that Christianity is something infinitely higher than any external administration. The Church is treated, as if it had grown out of its childhood and youth, and had entered its manhood. The decisions at which it may arrive are by no means matters of indifference, but for a knowledge of the Master's will it must betake itself to a study of indications furnished, and not to the examination of a code. The Church has been indeed trusted on questions of the utmost importance in a degree which could not have been expected. Look for instance at the Canon of the New Testament. How important is it that only those writings be accepted as inspired instruction under the New Dispensation, which can be proved to have been either composed by the Apostles, or stamped by their approval! The Old Testament, as possessed by the Jews, has come down to us with the signature of our Lord's frequent and express testimony. The attestation of the New Testament by the last survivor of the Apostolic band would have been deemed a high guarantee of its genuineness and authority. We know however that no such attestation has been given. The writings of the Apostles were early circulated and highly revered, but they were mixed up for a time with works of a different order. The Apostles had all departed, and it looked as if the Canon could never be satisfactorily settled. After a long period, not by the decision of any Council, for the small Council of Laodicea in the fourth century only witnessed to the prevailing belief of the Church, but by a gradually formed and widely diffused consent, which considering the state of the Church was singularly unanimous, the whole body of the faithful arrived at a conclusion, which has so recommended itself to succeeding ages, that though rationalists have found abundant scope for their sceptical ingenuity in trying to prove its unsoundness, it has been cordially accepted by Christians generally. As Christians we appeal without hesitation to the New Testament, though it has not received the imprimatur of an Apostolic hand. We need not then be stumbled, if we find no express legislation on the subject of the Sabbath. The whole manner of the book, and the way in which it has reached us might prepare us for the absence of an express enactment.

2nd.—Christ came into the world not to destroy the law, 2nd.—
Christ

came to fulfil the law. but to fulfil it. He came to introduce a dispensation, for which all previous dispensations had been the preparation, and which would be the consummation of them all. Previous dispensations were the foundation, this was the superstructure; they were the flower, this the fruit; they were the scaffolding, this the finished building. In previous dispensations there was much, which was temporary, and has passed away, not so much by being abrogated, as by being fulfilled. Every essential principle has been maintained, and has received emphatic confirmation. Even positive institutions apparently abolished are really upheld. The paschal lamb is no longer offered, and the paschal feast is no longer held, but is not the Lord's Supper the continuation of the Passover under the form suited to the days of the Messiah? The rite of circumcision is no longer administered, and by it no longer is admission obtained into the visible Church, but what is Baptism except its continuance in the form best fitted to the higher and more comprehensive position the Church has obtained?

3rd.—The Sabbath survives in a new form,

3rd.—If institutions like the Passover and Circumcision have been not so much abolished as transformed, we might fully expect the Sabbath in its essential principles to survive the change of dispensations. The Passover was an exclusively Jewish institution. Circumcision had been appointed long before the days of Moses, and was practised by other nations besides the Israelites, but it had been so closely interwoven with the Mosaic economy, that it came to be regarded as one of its essential elements. We have seen that the Sabbath stood higher than either the one or the other, or indeed than any other institution. It would be strange then, if they survived in new and higher forms, while the Sabbath, as if it had been simply a type of better things, had passed away, when they were accomplished, even notwithstanding the fact, that owing to its importance it had obtained a place in the decalogue.

4th.—The grounds for the Sabbatical appointment.

4th.—The argument for the continuance of the Day of rest is seen to have additional strength, when we consider the grounds for its appointment. Neither in the original law as found in Genesis, nor in its re-enactment on Mount Sinai, is the faintest allusion made to considerations of a merely perso-

nal, national, and transitory character. In the new creation, ment re-
 which has been effected by the coming of our Lord, and which main.
 is so great and glorious that the Prophet Isaiah says, (Ch. lxxv,
 17, 18) "the former shall not be remembered, nor come into
 mind," have we not a very strong additional reason for giving
 to the special service of God that portion of time, which had
 been consecrated from the beginning? In the redemption from
 sin and Satan secured for us by the blood of our Saviour Jesus
 Christ, have we not an infinitely higher object set before us for
 our grateful, loving, and reverential remembrance, than the
 children of Israel had for their redemption from Egypt? The
 grounds for the original institution, instead of being weakened,
 have become much strengthened, as the world's history has
 advanced. Here the maxim applies, *Lex stat dum ratio*
manet.

5th.—The argument is still further strengthened, when we 5th.—The
 look at the benefits it ~~was~~ intended to confer. These benefits benefits of
 are as much needed, and as precious, as they ever were. Rest the Sab-
 to both body and mind, release from ordinary labour and repose bath still
 for the soul in God's service, was the great boon provided for required.
 man by this institution. This double boon continues to be
 urgently required. By the coming of our Saviour and the
 setting up of His Kingdom in the world the conditions of hu-
 man life have not been changed. All things continue full of
 labour. Man has everywhere to exert himself for the supply
 of his wants. The toilers are to be seen everywhere. Never
 perhaps were the labours of life more pressing and exhausting
 than they are among multitudes in our own day. If rest every
 seventh day was welcome to the workers among the Jews, we
 should think it must be equally welcome to the great mass of
 our own population. The temptations and trials of life are as
 great as they ever were, and the tried and tempted spirit can
 be safe only by entering into the spiritual rest, for the attain-
 ment of which the Sabbath furnished special facilities. The
 cessation of the Day would be the withdrawal of these facili-
 ties. Our Lord came into the world to break every yoke, but
 those who hence conclude He has abrogated the Sabbatical rest
 surely take a very perverted view of the institution. It is
 strange to consider the command to rest as a yoke imposed.

Instead of gloom and severity we see nothing in the Day but the most tender consideration for man's welfare. Its cessation would be not the removal of a burden, but the withdrawal of a signal privilege, which led many other privileges in its train. Instead of raising us, this would be to put us in a far more disadvantageous position for both bodily and spiritual rest, than the position of those who lived in the times preceding the advent of the Messiah. We are subjected to no such privation, as we proceed to show.

In bringing these views with us to the consideration of the teaching of the New Testament regarding the Sabbath we are not prejudging the subject. If these views be baseless suppositions, we are liable to the charge, but if they rest on the clear lessons of God's word, and the certain facts of God's government, as we believe they do, they give us legitimate help in arriving at a right conclusion.

The first
day of
the week.

When we study the Apostolic writings we cannot fail to be struck with the prominence given to the first day of the week. On it our Lord came forth from the tomb, Matthew, xxviii, 1; Mark, xvi, 1; Luke, xxiv, 1; John, xx, 1. On that very day He appeared to His disciples. Eight days afterwards He appeared again to them. On the first day of the week, (Leviticus, xxiii, 15, 16,) the Spirit was poured out in a miraculous manner, thus impressively confirming the testimony of the Apostles that the Lord had risen, and bringing a large accession to the Church. Thenceforward it was the day appointed for the gathering together of the followers of Jesus, with a view to the observance of the peculiar services of the New Dispensation. We read that Paul and his companions on their way to Judæa from Philippi abode at Troas seven days. The narrative proceeds to inform us of what occurred "upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread," Acts, xx, 6—13. At 1st Corinthians, xvi, 1, 2, we read, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." In countries so widely separated from each other as Achaia and

Galatia, it is thus seen the first day of the week had a place assigned it for Christian work, which separated it from other days.

If in Mysia, Achaia, and Galatia, the first day of the week was under Apostolic direction set apart for the special services of the Church, there can be no reasonable doubt the same rule prevailed, wherever Christian communities were formed. The name given to the day in Revelation i, 10 is decisive in support of this view. There it is called *He Kuriake hemera* just as the Lord's supper is called *To Kuriakon deipnon* in 1st Corinthians, xi, 20. The form of the expression proves there was at that early period a day so universally recognized, as sacred to Christ, that it was called by His name. The incidental way in which the expression is introduced, as if it needed no explanation, gives a more striking testimony to the known consecration of the day, than could be furnished by any formal statement. Who can be the Lord, to whom the day is consecrated, but the Glorious One, who continually has that title assigned Him throughout the New Testament, and is in this very book called the King of Kings and Lord of Lords? What can His day mean but that first day of the week, which was made for ever memorable by His resurrection from the dead, an event which consummated every preceding proof of His being the Son of God, which showed that His work was accomplished, His enemies defeated, and His reign assured? The spiritual instinct, we would rather say the Divinely instructed minds of Christ's first disciples, at once seized on the day as the most appropriate for their gatherings. The title 'the first day of the week' speedily passed over into the higher and more specific title, 'The Lord's Day.' As the Lord's Supper was that sacred meal by partaking of which in common the disciples commemorated the death of their Lord, as the life of all who believe in Him, and avowed themselves to be His ransomed ones, so the Lord's Day was the day set apart to commemorate His resurrection, and by the contemplation, alone and together, of that event with the other events bound up with it, to inflame their hearts with love to Him, and anew to dedicate themselves to His service.

The word employed in the passage already quoted Acts xx,

7, which is translated 'came together' plainly tells us that it was the settled habit of the disciples thus to meet, as appears from the use of the same word in 1 Corinthians, xi, 17, 18; xiv, 23, 26; Hebrews x, 25. We see here something far higher than a mere ecclesiastical arrangement, resting on the exclusive authority of the Church, and to be laid aside, if the Church deem fit. We trace the appointment to the example and direction of the Apostles, and when we listen to them, we listen to their Lord, and bow to His will. May we not say when we come to the Apostles, and see them acting in their Apostolic capacity, we hear the Master's feet behind them?

The reasons for the appointment.

The reasons for the appointment are obvious. United worship was essential to the growth, we may say rather to the continued existence, of the newly formed Church. It was never intended that every follower of Christ should alone struggle against his spiritual foes, alone perform the work assigned him, and alone prosecute his journey heavenward. Such solitude would be contrary to the nature, with which God has endowed man, and subversive of the laws by which He governs the world. The social qualities of man, instead of being suppressed by true piety, are purified, quickened, and directed by it. Christ came to raise and sanctify, not to maim and impoverish our nature. Scattering men, separating them from each other as well as from God, and setting them in hostility against each other, is Satan's work, while gathering them, drawing them to God and to each other, is the work of our blessed Saviour. The disciples of Christ might have maintained intercourse without meeting together as a community, and joining together in common acts of worship, but the frequent assembling in one place of all the believers resident in a locality was fitted to impart new strength to the entire body of the faithful. Thus they could realise their oneness, as otherwise they could not, thus all their social nature was enlisted on the side of faith in Christ, thus peculiar opportunities were supplied for giving and receiving instruction and impulse, thus their union was manifested to the world around them. It was very important these gatherings should be held at fixed and frequently recurring periods, known by all, so that they might not be forgotten among the engage-

ments and trials of life, and so that the requisite leisure from ordinary occupations might be secured. What day could be more appropriate than the one actually appointed—that day of the week, on which their Saviour came forth from the tomb, thus opening the door of heaven to all who should believe on Him? *

If there be a Sabbath under the Christian Dispensation we undoubtedly find it in the first day of the week.

We cannot suppose that one day in the week, except during a brief transition period, has been set apart for the Sabbath, and another day for meeting together as Christians to engage in the peculiar services of the Christian Church, that other day too by its very title being specially dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ. As little can we suppose there are now two weekly Sabbaths. We have stated our reasons for our belief that the Sabbath has been continued, and with the example of the Apostles and primitive Christians before us we cannot hesitate as to the day on which it is to be enjoyed. It is natural for us to wish for a clear affirmation in direct terms, that the Sabbath has been upheld, while the day has been changed, but the more we consider the relation of the New Testament Church to that of former dispensations, and the mode of teaching employed in the New Testament, the less need we wonder that we are left to indirect and apparently incidental statements for the ascertaining of our Lord's will.

One Sabbath remains—the first day of the week.

Many are the objections advanced against the views we have been propounding. Let us consider some of them. 1st.—The

Objections.

* Three distinguished Divines, who flourished in three successive centuries, Dr. John Owen, President Jonathan Edwards, and Dr. Wardlaw, have constructed an elaborate argument in favour of applying Hebrews, iv, 9, to the Christian Sabbath. "There remaineth therefore a rest," a sabbath-keeping, "to the people of God." They maintain that the next verse refers to our Lord. "He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His." As the seventh day was consecrated for the Sabbath, because God on it ceased from the work of creation, so the first day of the week is now consecrated for the weekly rest, because on it Christ by His resurrection ceased from the work of redemption. There remaineth therefore under the Christian Dispensation a Sabbath for the people of God: In the English version of this fourth chapter of Hebrews we meet the word "rest" again and again, but in the Original the word for Sabbath-keeping occurs only in the ninth verse. We see much force in the argument, but our limits will not permit us to enter into it.

1st.—The spirituality of the Christian Dispensation has been alleged against the doctrine of the Christian Sabbath. We are told that as all time has been consecrated by the advent of the Messiah, no period is now more sacred than another, and that we ought at all times to raise our hearts to God. This we fully believe, but will not the perpetual consecration of our hearts to God be helped by fixed and often recurring seasons being specially set apart for His worship? Will not the six days of the week be more devoutly spent, because on the seventh there has been a withdrawal from worldly engagements in order to waiting on God? We are commanded to pray without ceasing, and in order to obedience to the command we must have set opportunities for prayer. Christianity is no outward service nor ordinance, however sacred, but it requires outward service, and has outward ordinances. By attending aright to these we are greatly helped in reaching the goal 'righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.* As we have already observed, the conditions of our natural and spiritual life remain unchanged, and our Heavenly Father has mercifully provided the aid we so urgently require. There is a hyper-spirituality, which ministers to a very unspiritual purpose.

2nd.—The seventh day is the Sabbath commanded by God. We are told that by making the first day of the week the Sabbath we abandon the fourth commandment at the very time we are contending for its perpetuity. To this we reply, the change of day leaves untouched the spirit of the command, and in one aspect does not even trench on its letter. There are still six days of work followed by a day of rest, the proportion of time being thus maintained.* We still work on six days and rest on the seventh, reckoning from the commencement of the working period, and not according to the order of the week.

If the law demanded the observance of the Sabbath within precisely the same hours, it could be obeyed only within the narrow boundaries of Judæa, and even in it there would be a

* Some may require rest at a shorter period, some at a longer, but a general law must have regard to the greatest number of cases, and experience amply proves the proportion actually fixed has been most wisely made.

slight difference. The Jews in the lands of their dispersion strictly observed the Sabbath, keeping it from sunset to sunset, and they were sufficiently scattered to have in some places a difference of hours in the time of their respective localities. Living as Christians do on different sides of the globe, the time for the Sabbath must differ widely, the worship of many ending, when the worship of others is beginning. We find in the Old Testament as little as in the New of a superstitious regard to certain hours, as if they had an intrinsic holiness, and entered as an essential element into the Sabbatical arrangement. The stress has been ever laid on a seventh portion of time being devoted to bodily rest and spiritual worship, and the change of day from the seventh to the first does not interfere with these objects in the slightest degree. While it does not take us away from the contemplation of the objects proposed in the original institution, it tends to fix the whole soul on the new creation and the great redemption, which form the glory of the Christian Dispensation. While the former deliverances of the Church ought not and will not be forgotten, the redemption effected by the death of Christ, and declared to be accomplished by His resurrection, has a pre-eminence, which entitles it to the most honourable commemoration here, in anticipation of the occupations of the redeemed above. We have only to get a glimpse of our Lord's resurrection in its connexion with the glory of God and the salvation of man to see how fit it was that the change should be effected, of which in the New Testament we have clear indications, while it was obviously unfit the Sabbath should continue on the day on which our Lord lay in the tomb. Our Saviour, as Lord of the Sabbath, has made the change through His Apostles, and has thus impressively taught His people, that He has entered on His mediatorial reign.

May we not also see in the change of the day the elevation of the Sabbath above its Jewish associations, and the elimination of that Jewish element, which did not belong to it as part of the decalogue, but which it contracted from being closely bound up with the Mosaic economy? In Ezekiel's vision of the Church in the days of the Messiah under the image of a glorious temple and ritual, we seem to find a pre-

intimation of the change of day in Ch. xliii, 27. "It shall be, that upon the eighth day, and so forward, the priests shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord God." We ought also to remember that taking the Scripture narrative exactly as we find it, the seventh day of the week was man's first day on earth, and it was, if we may so speak, God's first day after the creation-work was accomplished.

3rd.—The first day is not called the Sabbath.

3rd.—We are often reminded that the first day of the week is not even once called the Sabbath in the New Testament. The word Sabbath often occurs, and is invariably given to the day held sacred by the Jews. The reason is obvious. If two days received the same name, the one could not be distinguished from the other. That day naturally retained it, to which it had been long applied.

4th.—There were then two Sabbaths.

4th.—Again, we are told that if on our Lord's resurrection the first day of the week became the Sabbath, many of the first Christians must have kept sacred two successive days of every week, the seventh as Jews, the first as Christians. We cannot suppose this to have been the case. Beyond all doubt the Jewish Christians continued for many years to observe the seventh day as the Sabbath. If they clung so tenaciously, as we know they did, to the Mosaic dispensation, we may be sure they would have been shocked at the thought of desecrating the Sabbath by engaging in their worldly occupations. As Christians they met on the first day with Gentile believers for the peculiar worship inaugurated by the New Dispensation, and in all likelihood they gave the rest of the day to their usual avocations. There was no violent disruption of Judaism, that Christianity might take its place. It was intended that the one should melt into the other, and that the change should be effected not so much by direct command, as by the force of providential circumstances convincing Christ's followers Judaism had become old, and must disappear. At such a transition period there could not fail to be much irregularity and incongruity, which would cease, when the New Dispensation should be fully established.

We have already more than once observed, that no superstitious importance was attached to the mere hours, on which the

Sabbath was spent, and the Jewish Christians, when bent on doing their Lord's will, were doubtless accepted by Him, though owing to their peculiar position they deviated in letter from that which He intended to be the rule for His people in succeeding ages. In the great, we might almost say the necessary tenderness shown to the prejudices of Jewish believers, may we not find one reason for the absence of a direct enactment, commanding the Sabbath to be in future observed on the first day of the week?

The numerous slaves in the Primitive Church might have found it absolutely impossible to observe the Day, as Christians in ordinary times can. To such cases we may surely apply the memorable words quoted by our Lord, "I desired mercy and not sacrifice."

We have not yet come to the end of the objections advanced against the Sabbath in the times of the Messiah. One notable objection remains to be mentioned.

5th.—We are told that the New Testament directly disclaims such an institution. For instance in Romans, xiv, 5, 6, we read "One man esteemeth one day above another : another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord ; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it." If we look at the object of Paul when he wrote these words, we shall find it has no bearing on the subject under discussion. In the Church at Rome, as in other Churches, there were Jews, who not satisfied with a scrupulous adherence to the rites of the Mosaic economy insisted on their Gentile, brethren following their example. Thus unhappy strife was introduced, and the minds of believers were unsettled. They were occupied with the distinction between one day and another, and between one kind of food and another, when they ought to have had the soul fixed on Jesus as the Saviour, and on the excellence, which through Him they should attain. Paul directs them to the great truth (vs. 17, 18.) "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink ; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men." He assuredly does not mean by such words to disparage outward institutions, like Bap-

5th.—
The New
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tion.

tism and the Lord's Supper, more than when elsewhere he says, "Circumcision availeth nothing nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love," or as we read in another place—"but a new creature." If any of the Roman Christians had turned round on Paul and said, 'As you make so little of days we better meet for worship on some other day of the week, than the first. Another day will suit us better.' Paul would have resented such an inference as altogether illegitimate. He had no superstitious feeling in favour of one day above another, but one day on account of the glorious event which had occurred on it stood out so high above the rest, that he appointed it, we doubt not by Divine guidance, for Christian worship in the Churches planted by him. In consistency with the appointment he could write to the Church at Rome, as he did.

These remarks are applicable to the other passage often quoted, Colossians, ii, 16, 17. In Colosse as at Rome the Judaical externalizing and self-righteous spirit was at work, and Paul wrote to check it. Some suppose that as the word here used is 'Sabbaths,' not 'Sabbath,' or even 'the Sabbaths,' the reference is not to the seventh-day rest, but to the Jewish festivals, which went by that name. The word in its plural form is no doubt applied to Jewish festivals, Leviticus, xxiii, 32, 37—39, but it is also applied to the weekly rest, and when we read of the sacred seasons of the Jews, 'an holiday or the new moon,' we cannot suppose the day is excluded, which was most revered, and which the name so immediately suggests. So far as the Sabbath was a type of the rest Christ would impart it came to an end, but we have seen it was far more than this, and therefore it remains. 'The body' the substance 'is of Christ.' Too often was this 'body' hidden, not manifested, by the way in which rites intended to set it forth were observed. This perversion of Divine institutions has come down to the New Dispensation, because human nature has come down to it. The late Dr. Candlish has well remarked on this passage, "The Apostle is not discussing the subject of set times and modes of worship. He is thinking of something altogether different. He is insisting and dwelling on the spiritual standing of believers, as crucified with Christ

and risen with him. As crucified with Christ they are dead to all legal ordinances and formal observances. * * Are they to forego or compromise this liberty of acceptance and peace with God, on the footing of free grace and perfect righteousness, on which in Christ they now stand? No, not at the summons of any ordinances, be they ever so sacred or ever so salutary. Such I apprehend is Paul's reasoning; and being such it really does not require him to be very careful as to what ordinances he names as specimens. Nay, it is reasoning which will apply in full force to ordinances that are still of divine authority; to Baptism, the Lord's Supper, the Lord's Day; in so much that if at any time I saw a Christian brother suffering the observance of the Lord's day to come in between him and God's free grace; keeping the holy Sabbath in a legal frame of mind or in the spirit of bondage; I could almost find it in my heart to address him in the bold words of Luther, and bid him work, or play, or dance, or do anything with all its hours; rather than let it become an occasion of servilely working out a righteousness of his own; or mar the simplicity of his sole and single reliance on the perfect righteousness of Christ and the sovereign love of God."

So far as we know these are the main objections to the doctrine of a Christian Sabbath, and when candidly considered we think they have no validity.

The Jews as a people, with the destruction of their temple and the breaking up of their state, became more bitter than ever against the followers of Jesus, and those of Jewish descent became so united with their Gentile brethren that the previous distinction was effaced. One consequence of the blending in the Church of the two elements previously so marked, and not infrequently discordant, was that the seventh day of the week was no longer held sacred, and the first day was universally honoured, except by the small sects of Nazarenes and Ebionites, who continued to cling to Judaism. Justin Martyn, after giving an account of the way in which the services of the Church were conducted, says, "We meet on Sunday, since it is the first day on which God, changing the darkness and matter, made the world, and Jesus Christ our Saviour rose on the same day from the dead." A similar testimony is given by succeed-

The first day early became the acknowledged Christian Sabbath.

ing writers. The day was so obviously the successor of the ancient Sabbath, that it receives the name from such prominent leaders as Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Jerome, Augustine, and Chrysostom. Origen is, so far as we know, the first who uses expressly the term, "the Christian Sabbath." As the seventh-day rest was no longer observed by Christians, no misunderstanding could arise from the use of the ancient honoured and most suitable term. Those then are greatly mistaken who trace to a Puritan origin the application of the word 'Sabbath' to the first day of the week. It has come to us from the early Fathers, whose names are revered by all sections of the Christian Church.

Different
views of
the Lord's
Day.

While the first day of the week has had among professedly Christian nations a place not accorded to any other day, there has been a great diversity of opinion and practice regarding its obligation and observance. Many have regarded it as the continuance of the ancient Sabbath, and have considered themselves bound to abandon on it all secular pursuits, and to devote the day entirely to God's service, in the various forms in which that service can be rendered, while others have regarded it as an entirely new institution, and have looked on its requirements as met by attendance at public worship, and by the observance of rites enjoined by the Church, the rest of the day being free for such employments and pleasures as individual necessity or liking may suggest. The persons entertaining this latter view may be divided into two classes, who have reached the same conclusion by opposite routes.

The one class is composed of those who are strangers to spiritual and evangelical religion. They love the world, and are devoted to its gain, honour, and pleasure, but they more than suspect they will have an account to render of the manner in which they have spent their lives, and they think it well to do something, which will still conscience now, and incline at last the balance in their favour. Many such persons are very willing to give an hour or two on Sunday to what they deem religious work, provided they may spend the rest of the day as they like. They look on religion much as boys do on a rather hard lesson, which they get through as quickly as they can, and with it over they can sally forth as free to

follow their fancy as the birds of heaven are. To persons of this character a day shutting out both secular work and worldly pleasure would be an intolerable burden. In their opinion the Sunday is a Church Holiday, which demands a small part of their time, and considerably leaves the rest to their own enjoyment. How widely these views have prevailed in England, even in Post-Reformation times, is well known to every one in any degree conversant with our history.

To the second class we have already referred. They contend that the New Dispensation is too spiritual to admit of one day being more sacred than another. They remind us that our time, our property, our all are Christ's, and ought to be every day and hour consecrated to Him. They acknowledge indeed that special seasons set apart for God's worship are desirable, but they think these have a double value when spontaneously appointed, not authoritatively commanded. They think there is no Divine obligation to abstain from any secular work or pleasure, to which on other days persons may lawfully betake themselves.

The Reformers of the sixteenth century are often cited in defence of these views. Luther, Calvin, and their fellow-labourers are often summoned to rebuke and silence the narrow and sour Sabbatarians. They rise for the occasion into high favour with those who at other times have not one good word to say on their behalf. Even Calvin, that stern theologian, who is charged with driving his fearful dogmas through man's quivering heart, and at whose devoted head so many reproaches have been hurled, is for once a man of sense and sensibility. It is unquestionable that the Reformers said strong things about the abrogation of the Jewish Sabbath, and of our freedom from its bondage. The reason for their doing so is clear to all who understand their position. Christianity in their day had degenerated into a mechanical, slavish, and self-righteous observance of rites and days. Trust in Christ had been displaced by trust in the Church and its priesthood. Judaism with its manifold ceremonies had never been so burdensome as the system now administered under the Christian name. The holidays had been multiplied, till they included the third part of the year, and though on every

The opinion of the Reformers,

side, from the best and most thoughtful, protests had gone forth against their multiplication, the Popes went on adding to their number. The spirit of the whole was intensely antagonistic to the grace and freedom of the Gospel. The Reformers vigorously assailed the system, but they did not always accurately distinguish between the things which properly belonged to it, and those which were quite distinct though mixed up with it. The Lord's Day had become a Church Holiday, and because it was so unprofitably spent, the Reformers relegated it to those Jewish institutions, which had passed away. They were not always on this point consistent with themselves. When they forgot the manner and spirit in which the Day was actually spent, its great value rose up to their view, and drew from them as strong expressions of appreciation, as ever came from so-called Sabbatarians. The passages in which the Reformers declared their regard for the Lord's Day have been kept out of view by those who have summoned them to testify against the permanent obligation of the Sabbath.* Their real views were shown by the way in which they kept the Day. By their example they recommended its consecration. They delighted in the special services for which it furnished such great facilities. Calvin went so far in his observance of the Day, that he was charged with Judaizing. Since the days of the Reformers many of the best men on the Continent and some in Great Britain have maintained that the ancient Sabbath has come to an end, and that, the first day of the week rests on a different footing.

The admissions
of devout
men,

The admissions made by devout men when contending against the continuance of the Sabbath render, we think, their position untenable. They tell us the Day should be observed as a privilege rather than as a duty. Is the privilege of loving God with all the heart lessened by the love being commanded? The same remark may be made about love to Christ, faith in the Gospel, and the entire course of the Christian life. All is commanded and yet all is privilege. The higher the privilege, the greater the likelihood of its being placed under the sanction of the Divine command. If the Lord's Day be a great

* Gillfillan on the Sabbath, p. 406—422. Fairbairn's Typology, Vol. 2nd p. 140—142, 507—523.

privilege, is it deprived of its bloom, because ordered by Him, whose name it bears? The advantages of a weekly day of rest—release from toil, united worship at regular and frequently recurring seasons, opportunity for the cultivation of personal piety, and the facilities furnished for plying the careless, the worldly, the impenitent, and the ignorant with the instruction fitted to awaken, enlighten, and save them—are readily acknowledged by all Christians. Is it not God's will that these inestimable advantages be secured? Have we not clear indications such is His will, and is not every expression of His will, in whatever way it may be given, with the Christian equivalent to a command? One distinguished man, when contending against the continuance of the Sabbath as a Divine institution, has gone so far as to say that a weekly day of rest is an eternal necessity. Is it not fitting that God command what is necessary to the welfare of His creatures?

It may be said however, Why not leave all this under the present advanced dispensation to the judgment and ordering of Christians themselves? To this we reply that the Divine appointment of the Day secures a uniformity which it would be difficult, almost impossible, otherwise to obtain, and brings the whole question to bear on the conscience with a power, which the Church, even in its united capacity, can never wield.

If the first day of the week be the Christian Sabbath, as we believe it to be, we may be asked, Is the change of day the only distinction between the Sabbath of the times preceding and succeeding the advent of the Messiah? In reply we would say, that while the institution continues, it receives new dignity from the higher dignity of the Dispensation, to the services of which it is consecrated. As Christians we have a higher position than the children of Israel had, and our entire service ought to be marked by fuller knowledge, a stronger judgment, greater spirituality, and more filial liberty and love. If even of old believers were required to regard the Sabbath as 'a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable,' surely we ought to surpass them in the esteem accorded to it. We have now indeed nothing to do with the sanctions which guarded the Sabbath under the Mosaic economy, but the sacredness of the Day is not lessened on that account.

The difference between the Jewish and the Christian Sabbath.

If we look at this institution aright one thing will become plain—that the Lord's Day is the brightest and best in the week. It comes to us as a messenger of peace from God Himself, to dissipate our sadness, and inspire us with joy and hope. The Lord has risen. He rose to impart life to mankind. Because He rose Satan is conquered, sin is atoned for, heaven is opened, life and immortality are brought to light. His life is the life of the innumerable multitude, who through Him shall be eternally saved. Why should we not be joyful on a day appointed to commemorate such an event? Why should gloom be brought into a day, which is fitted to dispel all gloom, and to fill our lives with gladness? It was a day of joy to the primitive Christians, and it ought to be to us. Every day indeed the true Christian aims more or less earnestly at leading a heavenly life, but the Sabbath as a rule gives facilities, which no other day can furnish. Children at school away from their parents often write to them, and receive communications from them. When filial affection is strong, home is constantly in their thoughts, and their hearts bound with joy, when the day comes for visiting it. When the visit is paid they return to school with home associations freshened, and filial affection strengthened. May we not say that in this familiar illustration, kept of course within the limits, to which every such illustration is subject, we see the connexion between the Lord's Day, as observed by Christians, and every other day of the week? It is sad when children are unhappy on their visits to their homes. Assuredly Christians have no reason to be sad on the Day specially appointed for the worship and service of their God.

No minute instruction about Sabbath observance. When considering the Sabbath under the Jewish Dispensation we had occasion to remark, that while the greatest importance was attached to it, no minute instruction was given regarding its observance. This absence of minute instruction is remarkable under a dispensation so noted for its exact regulations. With this fact before us we are prepared to find the keeping of the Day left now to the Christian conscience and heart. If we keep in view the object for which it has been appointed, we cannot go far astray. We shall strive to do everything which will tend to make the Day one of

spiritual profit and enjoyment to ourselves, as well as of benefit to our fellow-creatures, and we shall shun everything, which would defeat the ends, for which the Day has been given to us. If it be wisely laid out we can secure the variety, for which the human mind craves, and escape the monotony which would bring weariness into its sacred hours. We shall not be like slaves or cowed children ever asking, Ought we to do this? Ought we to avoid that? We shall have the free and joyous spirit of children in a home full of happiness and love. This free filial spirit will guide us much better than a thousand regulations.

The intermission of our usual occupations, that we may give ourselves to the work of the Day, will be felt no trial. As to those pleasures, in which the people of the world often have their chief delight—the ball-room, the theatre, the race-course—regarding the general tendency of which we have nothing at present to say, what shall we say of them as a sequel to the hour professedly spent in God's worship? When we consider the spirit the Day is intended to cherish, the relation of such sports to it seems very much that of water to fire. A better plan could not be adopted to quench the religion, which consists in likeness to God's image, communion with Him, love to Him, and active devotedness to His service.

These views of the Sabbath bring us to the conclusion that only those can rise towards its ideal, whose hearts have been given to God. Others may like the day for various reasons. They may like it for the rest from labour it affords. They may like it because spent in social intercourse, or in the pursuit of what is called pleasure. They may be gratified by attending to the forms of worship, as a fitting homage to their Maker, which will be remembered in a future day to their advantage. They may be pleased with the accompaniments of worship. There may be even intellectual pleasure in contemplating the things of God, but there can be no spiritual service without a spiritual mind. We might as well expect persons to be alive one day in seven, and dead during the other six days, as to expect persons to be spiritual on the Lord's Day, and worldly through the rest of the week. The religion which is vigorous on Sunday, and sleeps soundly till the Sunday returns again,

O n l y
Christians
can keep
the Day
rightly.

is certainly spurious. If we be true Christians the difference will be that on the Sabbath we may, and in innumerable cases do receive an impulse, which tells most favourably on our daily life.

The ideal ought not to be laid aside, because it is so high that in the nature of things worldly people, professing to be Christians, cannot strive towards it. Why should some be deprived of its elevating influence, because others have no aspiration in that direction? To these others however the Day has been the occasion of untold good. Wherever God's word is possessed, His worship scripturally observed, and the Gospel faithfully preached, from age to age the work of salvation has been carried on. Many more have been converted on the Lord's Day, than on the other days of the week put together.

The alleged gloom of the Puritan Sabbath.

Who has not heard of the gloom and restraint of the Puritan, or as it is often called, the Scottish Sabbath? If we believe one half told regarding it, how *triste* it must be, to use the expressive word of our French neighbours! The very thought of subjection to it would fill many with horror. These sour Puritans are spoken of, as if they would, if they could, on the Sabbath lay arrest on the whole course of nature—would petrify for the day the animal creation, and silence the very songsters of the air. We are under no obligation to defend the Puritan Sabbath. The Jews, as we observed, laid restrictions on themselves, which God had not laid on them, and as the Puritans have been as fallible as their neighbours, it would not be strange, if they too had erred. Our concern is to uphold the Sabbath of the Scriptures, and whatever can be shown opposed to it, by all means let that be condemned. Still it may be well to try to strip ourselves of prejudice, and to look calmly at this Puritan Sabbath to see what it really was—what in it was good, and what defective.

The Puritans.

It ought ever to be remembered that the Puritans, strictly speaking, were no ecclesiastical party. They arose in the Church of England, and for many a day formed the most active and devoted portion of its community. While dissatisfied with some things in its institution, and wishing their alteration, they were warmly attached to it, and very averse to the abandonment of its communion. Their views of Chris-

tian doctrine and life very much accorded with those held by the portion of the English Church commonly called Evangelical. Hence the veneration still entertained for them, and the value attached to their writings, by many of the most devout members of the English Church. Gradually they became divided in their views of Church Government, enrolling themselves under the banners of Episcopacy, Presbyterianism, or Congregationalism, some practising infant baptism, others rejecting it, the vast majority adhering to Calvinism, but a few avowing themselves evangelical Arminians. This latter class have found a host of followers in the Methodists of the last Century, and of the present. To Church Government they ever gave a subordinate place. Their great idea was to bring individuals, society, all its engagements, and all its institutions, under the rule of supreme love to God, that with Him all life might be filled.

The idea of the Sabbath entertained by the Puritans naturally sprang from their idea of the nature and scope of true religion. They regarded it as a day to be sacredly devoted to God's service, when not only worldly employments but worldly thoughts and words should be laid aside, and the whole soul should be turned Godward and heavenward. Is not this a glorious ideal? We heartily adopt the words of Dr. Walker of Carnwath, "For my part I do not comprehend how any person with religious feelings and sympathies should not be ready to admit that at least there is something very grand about the Scottish Sabbath, in its idea of a day of communion with the Unseen and Eternal; of adoration of our Maker and our Saviour; of self-examination and moral exercise; of acquisition of religious knowledge;—and all this in order to the spiritual elevation of the soul, the replenishing of our moral energies, and a closer hold of the verities which have a place in our creed." * But why speak of the Scottish Sabbath? The constant use of this expression is misleading, as it ignores and tends indeed to deny the fact that many thousands in England, Ireland, and America, besides not a few on the Continent of Europe, hold the views of Sabbatic obligation and observance entertained by their Scottish brethren.

Their idea of the Sabbath sprang from their religion.

* Scottish Theology and Theologians, p. 184.

The defects of the Puritan Sabbath.

While thoroughly sympathizing with the ideal of the Puritans, we are far from thinking that they always adopted the wisest means for its realization. They were strongly tinged with the prejudices of their times, and also with prejudices arising from their peculiar position. We believe that on this very subject of the Sabbath they committed mistakes, which were injurious to themselves and others.

The Puritans without setting forth a written code prescribed the things to be done and avoided on the Day of rest. These generally accepted regulations were to a great extent in accordance with the spirit of the Day, but some of them demanded what the law did not demand, and they were altogether framed too much after the legal and Judaical model. The violation of even the most minute of these regulations was unhesitatingly condemned as the violation of the Day, while every one who would maintain his character for piety was bound to pay scrupulous regard to the whole. These unwritten regulations were reason itself compared with the puerile rules laid down by the Jewish Rabbis, but still they breathed too much the spirit of the servant, dreading the displeasure of his master, and too little of the child rejoicing in the freedom of his father's house. The effect was hurtful even to the most devout, as it tended towards a slavish spirit, quite opposed to their own views of Gospel grace. It was hurtful to others. The worldly, and so far as the history of the world has yet gone, they have ever formed the great majority of every community, either fretted at the restraint put on them, and hated the more that religion on behalf of which the yoke was imposed, or turned all this strictness to a self-righteous account, putting attention to these things in the place of the heart and life devoted to God's service. The effect on the young was perhaps the greatest evil caused by undue strictness. To many no doubt the day was unutterably wearisome, and too often the result was intense dislike to vital piety.

We believe another defect in the Puritan Sabbath has been its attempt to separate the worshipper on Sabbath from himself during the other days of the week, in a degree opposed to the constitution of our nature. We cannot lay ourselves aside on Saturday night to be resumed on Monday morning

spending the interval, as if we were the denizens of another world, and had nothing to do with this. We cannot but remember our engagements and cares during the past week, and anticipate the work of the coming week. Where there is the true Christian spirit there will be a striving to put aside secular care with secular work, and there will be the setting of the heart on Divine and eternal realities, but neither past nor present can be or ought to be obliterated from the mind. One great work of true religion is to make us act better in all the relations and circumstances of life, and we do not see how the Sabbath can have this effect, if we be forbidden on it either to review the past, or anticipate the future. If we may think of these things we may surely speak of them, as in free intercourse with others they are suggested to us, provided we speak of them in a manner consistent with the object, for which the Day has been appointed. We believe the Puritan Sabbath has in this respect often failed to pay due regard to the necessities of our nature and position.

The Puritan Sabbath has often been charged with a painful monotony. The public services have been unduly lengthened, and too little varied. Bodily exercise in every form has been forbidden. The reading declared suitable for the day has been too circumscribed. The employments of the Day have been too limited, and have been too much of the same order. Such is the charge. It is often made in an exaggerated form, but it has a measure of truth in it. The day as observed by the Puritans did not provide the variety, for which the human mind craves. How endlessly varied are the objects presented to us in this world, as if to give suitable and delightful employment to our versatile powers! What a prominent characteristic is variety in the composition of the Bible! What reason is there then for monotony in the exercises of the Sabbath! When we consider the variety, which is not only admissible but advisable in public worship; when we look at the diversified range of Christian literature, with its didactic teaching, its biographies, histories, and poetry, thereby corresponding with the Book on which it is founded; when we consider the fields of usefulness open to those who have the heart to enter them, we think that without going a step beyond the legiti-

mate requirements of the Day, we may escape the monotony, which the mind dislikes, and secure the variety for which it longs. Even the most devout become tired and jaded, when services are too prolonged, and kept in one line, and we need not wonder at the weariness caused to others.

We deem however the greatest defect to have been the attempt to force all into the groove of piety. Restrictions were laid on worldly people, which irritated but did not change them. Whatever may be our view of the province of the Magistrate in the sphere of religion, all may agree in the opinion that it is his duty to regulate the holidays of the community. In a professedly Christian land the first day of the week is most appropriately appointed as a day of rest, and the Magistrate may not only command the cessation of business, but remove temptations to the violation of the sanctity of the Day. When the Magistrate goes beyond this, he is likely to turn people into formalists, legalists, hypocrites, or open rebels against Divine authority, but he cannot drive them into the fold of Christ. The Puritans were too apt to forget they could not compel others to strive towards their ideal. They were bound to do in their own case what they saw to be right, and in regard to others they ought to have been satisfied with showing to them by example and instruction the way to the higher life.

These defects in the Puritan observance of the Sabbath suggest useful lessons.

Lessons If the Christian spirit be maintained we shall be under no
taught by temptation to desecrate the Sabbath by unworthy license, but
these de- we shall not be ever attending to petty details and ever asking,
fects. Is this right? Is that wrong? We should not endeavour to effect an unnatural separation between the Sabbath and the other days of the week. We ought to avail ourselves of the diversity of which the Sabbath admits, and which makes it increasingly pleasant and profitable. Above all, we ought to beware of making ourselves a rule for others. Christians cannot but wish others to enter into their joy, and should incessantly try to draw them to it, but compulsion should be shunned as at once wrong and unwise. Special care should be taken to make the day interesting and attractive to young

persons, and with Christian wisdom and tact we believe much may be done. We ought to guard against the extremes of too much and too little time spent in public worship, and Christian work.

We have been speaking of the defects of the Puritan Sabbath. If we were to say nothing of its excellences and benefits we might leave our readers under a misapprehension we should greatly regret. Both in a temporal and spiritual aspect it has been fraught with blessing to successive generations. The release from bodily toil one day in seven has been an unspeakable boon, and has been found by experience to be a powerful stimulus to industry. Who can tell the spiritual benefit received by the spiritual services and exercises of the Day?

The excellences of the Puritan Sabbath.

The writer of this Essay may be here allowed to give his own experience. He was brought up in a Highland village in Scotland, where a devoted Minister preached the Gospel with earnestness and power. There was always a good attendance at public worship, but in summer so many persons came from a distance, some well on to twenty miles, that the service was often held in the open air. Before the service, as the groups arrived, most on foot, but some in carts and on horseback, what hearty greetings were there! How warmly did they inquire about each other's welfare! What words of sympathy and kindly feeling were uttered! The services were protracted, but the people did not weary. When all was over, as they were preparing to depart, what joy was depicted on many a countenance! If strangers had been present, prepared to see doleful gloomy faces, reminding them of a funeral procession, and to hear words uttered in subdued tones, the scene before them would have little corresponded with their anticipation. There was no levity, but there was thorough cheerfulness, and in the faces of a few, especially of the old, there was a singular brightness, indicative of an intense joy, which greatly impressed the youthful mind, though its cause was not understood. The writer of this Essay amidst all the wanderings of his future life has retained a vivid remembrance of these aged Christians. It must be acknowledged the young members of pious families did find the services too long, and they envied their compani-

The Sabbath in a Scotch Highland village.

ons who on the summer evenings were allowed to roam the fields and woods, but still even to them there was much to make the day one of interest, and to cause a pleasant break in the monotony of the week. As these young persons grew, when they began to perceive the true end of life, they looked back to these Sabbaths with a reverence, which told most favourably on their character. The irksomeness and restraint were forgotten, and the Day given to heaven rose before their minds invested with a Divine grandeur.

These good Highland people had indeed some notions, at which we may smile. Shaving on the Sabbath was considered a marked violation of its sanctity, and the making of a bed was deemed a doubtful act. Those however who suppose that attention to such petty things was the religion of the people are under a great mistake. The minds of the pious were occupied with the highest themes, and they were deeply impressed with the truth that true religion is the worship of God, who is a spirit, in spirit and in truth.

Similar reminiscences to those of the writer can be given by thousands. If we can judge by our own observation and experience, happier and more cheerful homes have not been in this world than those of many, who have attached a high sanctity to the Sabbath. On that-day their happiness has not deserted them, although it has then received a peculiar tinge. Not a little amusement has been given to the occupants of pious homes in Scotland and elsewhere by the picture often given of their grim looks and unnatural gravity, but amusement has given place to sadness, when they have thought of the prejudice thus excited and sustained against true religion. *

The Day continues to be held sacred.

We would again say, as it is so important to keep it in view, that what for convenience sake we have called the Puritan or Scottish Sabbath, has been and is the Sabbath of a vast host of pious people all the world over. We have used the past tense we fear too frequently. The Day continues to be held by many as sacredly as it ever

* Dr. Walker in the concluding chapter of his work, 'Scottish Theology and Theologians,' gives an admirable reply to Mr. Buckle's indictment of Scottish religion.

was, and will we doubt not continue to be so held till the end of time. The defects of our pious forefathers in the observance of the Day are generally discerned. We must beware lest in removing these defects, the high ideal of the Day, as kept by them, be not sufficiently regarded.

We are far from maintaining that no dark spots are to be seen in those communities, among whom the Sabbath has been strictly observed. It would be folly to do so. No institutions, however excellent, can restrain men from the commission of wickedness. The evil of man's heart will break through every barrier, which can be raised against it. Even that, which is in itself excellent, is often turned into the occasion of evil. This has been the case with the Sabbath. A weekly day for bodily and spiritual rest is an invaluable privilege, but if persons be set on sin, the leisure of the day will be turned, and no doubt has been often turned, to a mischievous account. We have a striking illustration of *causa pro non causa* in the charge that the drunkenness, too prevalent in Scotland, is traceable to its Sabbatarianism. Drunkenness and Sabbath observance are so opposed to each other, that those addicted to the one are as a class noted for their disregard to the other. Sabbath observance has done much to check this and other vices, and its general relaxation would be assuredly accompanied by the increase of vice in every form. Is the non-observance of the Sabbath on the Continent of Europe the means of suppressing vice and promoting morality?

Dark spots in Sabbath-keeping countries.

We have left ourselves little space to apply the views given of the Sabbath to professing Christians in India. Those who have kindly followed us thus far will be prepared for the application of our remarks.

The Sabbath in India.

We live among a people, who have no weekly rest. Hindoos and Musalmans have many holidays, but they have no day resembling our Sunday. The Musalmans on Friday, their sacred day, gather in numbers at the Mosque for prayer, but when the service is over, in this country at least, they pursue their usual occupations. So far as we are aware there is only one day in the year, a day during the Holce festival, when the Hindoos deem themselves bound to abstain wholly from se-

The people of India have no weekly rest.

cular work. Among a Hindoo and Musalman population there can be no respect for the Christian Day of Rest, and there should be no attempt to enforce it. Every such attempt would be opposed to the spirit of Christianity, and would only intensify the existing prejudice against the Gospel.

The Sabbath as observed and desecrated in India.

We might expect however professing Christians to observe the Day in a manner which would separate them from their Hindoo and Muhammadan neighbours. The Sabbath-keeping of the Jews attracted the special notice of the heathen of their day, and brought down on them bitter jibes, and the Sunday-keeping of Christians might be expected to form one of their characteristics, in whatever aspect it might be regarded by others.

We have reason to be thankful for the public honour paid to the Day by the Government of India. The great Public Offices are closed, and Public business is suspended. Not only Europeans but many Natives are thus released from work. Government Schools of every description, even those in remote villages, are shut up. Years ago orders were issued that Public work of every kind, whether carried on by Europeans or Natives, should be laid aside, and we believe the order is generally obeyed, so far as the work directly carried on by Government servants is concerned, but contractors are allowed in many cases, if not in all, to do what they like. All over this great land, whatever else is known about Christians, it is known that Sunday is by them distinguished from other days.

When we look however at the manner in which the day is generally kept by professing Christians, much is seen to grieve those who desire the honour of God and the good of their fellow-creatures. The number of Church attendants is large, apart from soldiers, whose attendance is compulsory. With an hour's service at Church all respect for the day ends we fear with the great majority. There are indeed no Balls, no Theatricals, but there is no pause to ordinary secular work—buying, selling, taking accounts, and directing Native artisans. Without any necessity the day is continually chosen for travelling, as if for that purpose it had the advantage over other days. Picnics are not infrequently given, and when parties are away in the country hunting is a favourite amusement.

To show any respect for the Day besides going to Church is in the opinion of many to prove oneself a narrow-minded Sabbatarian.

We need not wonder at the conduct of many regarding the Sabbath. Persons who flaunt their infidelity, and those who without avowing themselves infidels openly violate the laws of God, could not be expected to pay respect to a Christian institution. Almost as little respect for the Day could be expected from the many, whose outward conduct is correct, but whose entire bearing shows that religion is to them a matter of perfect indifference.

There is another class however from whom better things might be expected. We refer to those who regularly attend public worship, go frequently to the Communion, have some sense of Divine things, and would be highly displeased, if their Christianity was questioned. We have been often surprised at the little regard to the Day paid by not a few of this class. They are seldom absent from public worship, but when it is over, they seem to have no idea of the high uses to which the Day may be turned. There is no careful avoidance of secular work, and no special attention to spiritual improvement. If the sacredness of the Day were duly considered, and a resolute effort put forth to keep it holy, we cannot doubt the effect would be happy. Those who are deceiving themselves with the thought that they are Christians, when they are not, might by the Divine blessing discover their mistake, and become what they now suppose they are. Those who are Christians would make marked progress, and obtain a position so far in advance of their present one, that they would wonder at their former selves. Then too they might, without going out of their sphere, find opportunities for promoting the spiritual good of those around them, and their manifest regard to the Day would tend to the honour of Him, whom they call Lord and Saviour. All this could be done without showing a particle of a scrupulosity more akin to Hindooism than Christianity. By all means let everything be done which is requisite for health, or even comfort. Let every opportunity for doing good to others be eagerly embraced. The Day will be hallowed, not desecrated, by such work.

Sabbath observance is practicable in India. We are sometimes told this strict observance of the Sabbath is impracticable in India. It is said that the Natives, on whose services we are dependent, will not work sufficiently on other days, and that we must therefore make them work on the Sunday. If this be the case our condition is hard,* for on this point we must bring ourselves down to their level, instead of trying to raise them to ours. If they must work we must see how the work is done, and thus for the time we are acting as heathens, not as Christians. We wish no violent interference with their disregard to the Day, but why should we be required to imitate them? We believe this difficulty like many others is stronger in appearance than in reality. If we attach importance to the work of the week being accomplished in six days, we shall find means of getting it accomplished. Our determination to have it done will be soon perceived and accepted by those who have to do it. As to those who receive daily wages we are told they have difficulty in obtaining support by working all the week through, and that it is cruel to deduct one day in seven from their time. There would be no doubt cases of hardship, but if a weekly rest were generally adopted, the strength of the people would be increased, and their condition would be gradually improved. The difficulty is indeed in not a few cases caused by Europeans themselves. We knew a Native Coach Maker, who transacted business mainly with Europeans. For a time he shut up his place on the Sunday. His workmen at first grumbled, but gradually liked the measure. Sometime afterwards we observed his place open, and on our asking the reason, he said he was forced to do it to retain his customers. Gentlemen often came on a Sunday to see their conveyances, and when they found his place shut up they were very angry. Several had said to him, he had nothing to do with the Sunday—that belonged to Christians only, and if he continued to act in so foolish a manner, they would have nothing to do with him. The result was, he said, much against his will he was obliged to resume work. We have no doubt such cases have now and then occurred.

The testimony given by the Sabbath. For a reason early stated in this Essay, a large part of it is occupied with the Scripture argument for the retention of the Sabbath under the Christian dispensation. The validity of

the argument can be acknowledged only by those who receive the Bible as the Word of God. We have not however confined ourselves to the assertion of our authority for holding one day in seven sacred. We have endeavoured to show the secular and spiritual advantages, which the institution is intended to secure. On these advantages a strong argument may be founded in favour of the Divine origin of the Book, in which the weekly day of rest has so prominent a place. The argument, if apprehended, is well fitted, we think, to tell on the minds of candid persons, who are not ready to receive any statement on the mere authority of the Bible. In this aspect we consider this Essay to have a direct bearing on the aim pursued throughout the series.

Not only has much evil been done in this world, but evil has been often defended and honoured, and good has been condemned. Evil has however never been defended as evil, nor good condemned as good. The name of some good quality has been given to the evil, and wrapped in that fair disguise it has received honour. The name of some evil quality has been affixed to good, and under that name it has been hooted down. What a tribute is this fact to the moral nature, with which man was originally endowed!

We have an illustration of this action of the human mind in the treatment which the Sabbath has received. Few institutions have been so bitterly assailed. The most distinguished Roman writers, Ovid, Juvenal, Persius, Tacitus, Horace and others, shot some of their sharpest arrows at the Sabbath-keeping of the Jews.* Who does not know what has been said from age to age by many professing Christians against the narrow, gloomy, intolerant, joy-suppressing Sabbatarians, with their scrupulosity and uncharitableness? We are reminded of the martyrs to the truth of God, who were over-whelmed

* Gillilan in his work on the Sabbath gives several quotations from these writers. We give only one—from Juvenal's 14th Satire, which may be thus translated,

'By them no cooling spring was ever shown.

'Save to the thirsty circumcised alone;

Why? but each seventh day their bigot sires
Rescued from all that social life requires.'

The passage is aimed at Roman converts to Judaism.

with the most atrocious charges, and were led forth to execution clad in robes with hideous pictures of devils and the flames of hell, that the hatred of the populace might be the more inflamed.

Bodily
rest. Is
that re-
pulsive?

Let us strip the Sabbath of the dress with which its enemies have covered it, and look at it as set before us in the Bible. As there represented, wherein is its repulsiveness? Sabbath we all know means 'rest.' Ought that word to be disliked in this world of toil? The institution immediately and directly provides for a weekly day of release from labour. Ought that to be deemed a hardship by either employers or employed? The necessity for daily rest is enforced by nature itself, and secures compliance, whether we will or not. The necessity for the weekly rest is not so urgent, and is not enforced in the same manner, but the beneficent tendency of the arrangement is proved by innumerable facts. Throughout England, Scotland, Ireland, the United States of America, British America, and the British Colonies, commercial, manufacturing, and agricultural operations, and indeed industrial operations of every kind, are with trifling exceptions suspended for an entire day every week. Are those countries, in energy, enterprise, intelligence, moral worth, wealth, comfort, or any thing by which one country can have superiority over another, behind those in which Sunday business is only partially suspended, or not suspended at all? The answer to this question may be safely left to those who will honestly look at facts, and attach to them their proper meaning. Those must be blind indeed who do not perceive that the comparative prosperity of these countries has been largely secured by the weekly cessation of labour. Some have spoken of the terrible dulness, the death-like stillness, of the streets in the cities of Great Britain on the Sunday, compared with the stir and life of the streets in the cities of the Continent. We wonder what the thousands think of this dulness, by whose release from shop and factory it is caused. When we think of its cause, ought it to be condemned?

Spiritual
rest. Is
that not
required?

Something more however than bodily rest is secured by the Sabbath. Effort to promote the temporal and spiritual good of our fellow-creatures is recommended by the example

and instruction of our Lord. Is not such effort worthy of commendation? The special work of the Day is the worship of the Living God through Jesus Christ His Son. If there be one above us infinitely great and good, our Creator, Preserver, and Governor, our God and Father, what higher work can human beings have than communing with Him and doing Him service? Ought not the leisure to be prized which gives facilities for this glorious work? Condemn, if you like, the puerile rules by which the Rabbis regulated Sabbath observance; condemn, if you like, the defects of the Puritan Sabbath, but do not condemn their ideal, for it was noble. What is there in the institution itself, as represented in the Bible, to excite the just dislike of an intelligent and moral creature? Against it we have not heard even a plausible argument to the present hour.

If any of our Native friends have been so good as to follow us through this discussion we would say to them, 'You know well that though you have many holidays, you have no day resembling the Christian Sunday. You have no frequently recurring day for bodily and spiritual rest. Your holidays are adapted to your religion, as the Sunday is adapted to Christianity. Many of you know the value of the bodily rest, which the Sunday closing of the Public Offices secures, and would deprecate the with-drawal of the boon. Would it not be well if the boon could be shared by your countrymen generally? Would not the weekly stoppage of work prove eventually an immense advantage to all classes? You at any rate might be expected to hold that opinion. So far as the experiment has been tried you know it has answered. Testimony has been furnished from various factories and industrial occupations superintended by Europeans in different parts of India. We mention an instance, which has come under our immediate notice. On the slopes of the Himalaya there are numerous tea-plantations belonging to Europeans, on which thousands of hill people find employment. On these there is no Sunday work. On Saturday afternoon the labourers may be seen with great glee hastening to their homes. They do not look as if they thought it was a hardship to have no plantation work on the next day, and we have never heard a tea-planter say, that

The boon
of the
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India.

he had lost by the cessation of labour on one day in seven. What is done in this case, we have no doubt, might be profitably done in all cases. —But ought you not to turn the day to a higher account than that of bodily rest? Ought not that great event to interest you, which this day has been appointed to commemorate? Ought you not to seek the spiritual rest, which so many of you have been taught is to be found in the living God through Jesus Christ His Son? If this institution be so fitted to promote man's temporal and spiritual welfare, as we have shown it is, is it not worthy of Him who seeks the good of all His creatures, and in the fact of the institution having a prominent place in the Bible, have we not an additional proof of its Divine origin?

T h e It will be observed we have used the three names, the Lord's
n a m e s Day, Sabbath, and Sunday. The Lord's Day has our preference
g i v e n on account of its New Testament usage and exceeding appropriateness. Sabbath is surely, a good, we might say, a delightful word. As the Lord's Day is the successor of the ancient Sabbath, we think ourselves fully justified in giving it this name. To 'Sunday' objections were urged in Post Apostolic times, because the name had its origin in the idolatrous worship paid on that day to the sun. For the same reason the Puritans regarded the word with intense dislike, and to the present time many Christian people refuse to employ the term. We cannot say we have any scruple regarding it. This seems to us one of those cases in which we may most rightly strip a word of its bad associations, and invest it with the better meaning, which itself suggests. When we think of Christ the Sun of Righteousness rising on that day, the term comes most pleasantly to our ear.

The dis- It would ill become us to unchristianise those who do not
astrous accept the views of the Christian Sabbath maintained in this
e f f e c t s Essay. To do this would be to unchristianise some of the best
p r o d u c e d men this world has known. Without any arrogance however
b y l o w we may be allowed to deplore, as we do, the statements made
v i e w s by some Christian men regarding the abrogation of the Sabbath,
o f by some Christian men regarding the abrogation of the Sabbath,
t h e as not simply erroneous, but as actually productive of
S a b - immense mischief. It is a notorious fact that the Sabbath is
b a t h . scarcely better observed by the Protestant than by the Roman

Catholic nations on the Continent of Europe. The leisure secured by the partial suspension of business is by the vast majority devoted to frivolous pleasures. In defence of this desecration of the Day the words of Calvin, Luther, and their associates are often quoted. No regard is paid either to their counter statements, or to the manner in which they actually spent the day. In Great Britain there is much, very much, to cause grief to every Christian heart, but we think it is no partial bias, which has brought us to the conclusion that among its inhabitants spiritual life is more widely diffused, and more vigorously exercised, than among Continental nations. We have a profound conviction that the infidelity, irreligion, and vice so rampant among them, notwithstanding the influence of a most devoted Christian band, and the consequent social and political unrest, are in a large measure due to the habitual and gross violation of the Lord's Day, which throws obstacles in the way of Public Worship, indisposes people to attend it with composure and seriousness, disinclines the mind for retirement, and, we may say, carefully provides for effacing every holy impression, which may have been made. The best men among both the Protestant and Roman Catholic communities, whatever may have been their theory of the Sunday, have greatly lamented this desecration, and have again and again put forth efforts to check it. If the Reformers were to come from their graves we cannot doubt they would be shocked with the fruit their unguarded words had produced, and would heartily join those bent on recalling the people to such an observance of the Day, as they themselves, while in this world, delighted to render. The evil has taken such deep root, that the efforts put forth to check it have had very limited success. It can only be counteracted by a deep and wide revival of true religion, to which it at the same time opposes the most formidable obstacles. The Christians in those lands do not despond. They are working hopefully, knowing that their Leader lives and reigns, and that no opposition, however formidable, can prevent His final triumph.

In Great Britain some excellent men have of late propounded views on this subject, the prevalence of which we heartily deprecate. As in the case of the Reformers, their views, if diffused, will produce effects very different from those,

Conclu-
sion.

which they anticipate. But we trust they may not be diffused. We believe living Christians, with few exceptions, are ready to stand firmly on the Day, as a most loving, wise, and holy institution of heaven's appointment. The many who are at present pressing into the kingdom of God will we doubt not value it as a boon of untold worth. By its appreciation and right use they will be braced for the duties, trials, and temptations of the week. The true consecration of the Day by all nations will be a sure proof that the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. The spirit of the Sabbath will then penetrate the entire life, and make the world a suburb of heaven, so that when the words are heard, 'Come up hither,' the soul can feel itself at once in a most congenial sphere, for which it is fully prepared. God hasten this blessed time in mercy to our weary sin-tossed race!



